

Friedrich Schiller

ON THE
NAIVE AND
SENTIMENTAL
IN LITERATURE

Translated and Introduced by
HELEN WATANABE-O'KELLY

one with nature

SCHILLER

On the Naive and Sentimental in Literature

(alienation from nature)

translated with an introduction
by Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly

Jenina: unbalanced history prof (philosophy of history)

Kant
change the people first" to have a new type of society;
→ aesthetic education
state of freedom in make-up society

Cotta publisher
First literary newspaper → but literary critical ~~journal~~ journal
"Die Horen" (the glauc): Not political; about politics
Literature (high - (Germans) did it long → every serious literature
trash - (literature) persisted in Germany)

German debate of ancient and modern (influence on
emerged of contemporary literature Romanticism)

realism and idealism

German National Theater

Germany

Reaction to Kant ("On the Sublime") → more practical
(still abstract but)

Schiller: speculative; from books (Goethe from personal
experience)



poetic: great pagan

Ancient

Greek

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great in polarity, oppositions.

FOR TOSHIO

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INTRODUCTION

'NOBLE Sir, Highly Esteemed Privy Councillor' (1)—thus begins Schiller's first letter to Goethe dated 13 June 1794. The letter begs Goethe in the most polite and flattering terms to give his blessing to a new literary periodical Schiller was founding called *Die Horen* (2). This was the first move towards the formation of one of the greatest literary friendships there has ever been, without which this essay on *The Naive and Sentimental in Literature* and indeed all of Schiller's and much of Goethe's mature work would not have been written. This essay, therefore, is not only an eighteenth-century treatise on aesthetics but a monument to the friendship between two great writers.

Previous to this, relations between Goethe and Schiller had not been good. Schiller had always admired and wished to meet the famous Goethe who was ten years his senior and had become an established poet while Schiller was still in his teens. Their first meeting unfortunately took place in 1788, a few months after Goethe's return from Italy, when everything in his home country appeared distasteful. Goethe, who knew and disliked Schiller's early plays, had an inbuilt prejudice against their author and remained frosty and aloof, exhibiting the patrician reserve which Schiller was later so effectively to penetrate. After that early meeting, Schiller felt hurt and rejected and relations between the two men remained cool even though, since 1789, Schiller had been living in the university town of Jena where Goethe had a house and which was in any case very near to Weimar, Goethe's permanent residence. The fact that in 1790 Schiller had married Charlotte von Lengefeld, a young noblewoman well known to Goethe and to court circles in Weimar, made no difference.

In a letter to his friend and protector, Christian Gottfried Körner, dated 9 March 1789, Schiller sums up the situation between himself and Goethe: 'This person, this Goethe, is simply in my way and he reminds me so often that Fate has treated me harshly. How easily his genius was supported by his fate and how I must struggle to this very moment! I can now no longer catch up on all that I've missed—one can't re-educate oneself completely after thirty—and I couldn't even begin this re-education for the next three or four

years . . . ' This letter already gives us an idea of the very different lives and careers of the two men. Their origins were equally different.

Schiller, born in Marbach in the Duchy of Württemberg in 1759, was the son of a simple army officer. As a young boy, Schiller wanted to enter the church. However, thanks to the despotism of Karl Eugen, Duke of Württemberg, who still governed his subjects like a seventeenth-century Absolutist prince, Schiller was forced to enter the so-called Karlsschule, a military academy run on the strictest lines, which rapidly turned the bright and studious boy into an academic dullard. He suffered torments at school and subsequently in the army which the Duke compelled him to enter as a medical officer. He turned to literature as a refuge from his uncongenial surroundings but when his first play *Die Räuber* (*The Robbers*) was performed in Mannheim in 1782, Karl Eugen forbade Schiller ever to write again. This forced Schiller into political exile, escaping from Württemberg under a false name. He was thus separated from his family and condemned to a life of wandering and poverty for many years.

It is small wonder that *Die Räuber* with its subtitle 'in tirannos' and its message of freedom should, in the years before the French Revolution, have excited Karl Eugen's displeasure. It was followed by two other plays, equally explosive politically, *Die Verschwörung des Fiesco zu Genua* (*Fiesco's Conspiracy at Genua—1783*) and *Kabale und Liebe* (*Intrigue and Love*, also called *Luise Millerin—1784*). The much more mature play *Don Carlos* was written in 1787. During these years Schiller was impoverished and plagued by debt and the serious illness which was his constant companion until his early death at the age of forty-six. He was only able to survive thanks to the various loyal friends that Schiller always knew how to make. He was also becoming more and more conscious of the gaps in his education left by the Karlsschule, for we must remember that he had never been able to attend university. Therefore, although his chronic ill-health made it plain that he was living on borrowed time and though he knew his vocation was that of poet, he gave up his work as a dramatist for almost ten years in order to study and to establish the theoretical basis for further plays.

During the ten-year break from literature he wrote and studied history, taking up the chair in that subject at Jena University in 1798.

He devoted himself to the systematic study of Kant whose works were only beginning to appear during the 1780s. He also immortalised his ideas on literature and aesthetics in a series of essays of which some of the best-known are *Ueber Anmut und Würde* (*On Grace and Dignity*), *Ueber das Erhabene* (*On the Sublime*) and *Ueber die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen* (*On the Aesthetic Education of Man*), all in 1793. The series culminated in 1795 in the present work, *Ueber naive und sentimentalische Dichtung* (*On the Naive and Sentimental in Literature*). Schiller thus laid the foundation for the plays written during the last eleven years of his life, i.e., the *Wallenstein* trilogy, *Maria Stuart*, *Wilhelm Tell*, *Die Jungfrau von Orleans* (*The Maid of Orleans*), *Die Braut von Messina* (*The Bride of Messina*). This method of proceeding from the theoretical to the practical in literary matters is typical of Schiller. As the seventy-four-year old Goethe remarked to his Boswell, Eckermann, on 14 November 1823, long after Schiller's death: 'It wasn't Schiller's way to proceed with a certain unconsciousness and as though by instinct; he had rather to reflect on everything he did.' This essay, therefore, marks the end of the transition from Storm and Stress dramatist to the maturity of his later years. It is also a testimony to Schiller's honesty of purpose and his courage in holding back from the writing of further plays until the groundwork had been laid.

At the time when Goethe first met Schiller, however, all this was in the future and to Goethe, Schiller was still the author of *Die Räuber*, the tone of which was displeasing to Goethe. Schiller's request to collaborate on *Die Horen* was, however, a move in the right direction and the decisive meeting between the two men finally took place in August 1794. They had both attended a scientific meeting in Jena and bumped into each other on the way out. They began to talk and walked home together. They got as far as Schiller's house, still talking, and Goethe went in to continue the discussion. This was the real beginning of their friendship. Schiller wooed the great Olympian, attempted to understand his point of view and to soothe him and soon Goethe had as much respect for Schiller as he for Goethe. For the next eleven years they saw each other or wrote to each other almost every day and their voluminous correspondence from that first formal letter to the notes dashed off during Schiller's last illness, though conducted to the end

in the 'Sie' or polite form, is a touching and revealing monument to a kind of marriage in which each became indispensable to the other. They collaborated on literary projects, they encouraged each other in literary endeavour and both men entered the period in which they wrote their best work. In 1805 Schiller died at the age of forty-six while the older man lived on until 1832.

In almost every way one can think of they were opposites. Goethe was better born, coming from a patrician Frankfurt family. Fame, social success and financial gain came to him early. At the time Schiller met him, he was a Privy Councillor to the Duke of Weimar, had been ennobled, was a friend of princes. All this, as we have seen, is very different from Schiller's early and continuing struggles against grinding poverty and crushing ill-health. Schiller, however, had a genius for friendship and could inspire life-long affection in the most disparate people, and, though in general inept with women, had the great good sense to marry the ideal wife who presented him with four children whom he dearly loved. Goethe the womaniser, on the other hand, was essentially a lonely man. He legalised his union with his common-law wife only to protect her during the Napoleonic Wars and he had only one son. He associated with many men but Schiller was the only friend who was truly his equal. Successful in a worldly sense, enjoying robust health, weighed down with honours, Goethe still needed the warmth and vivacity that Schiller could provide. If, however, the gulf between the two men's attitudes to literature and ideas had not been bridged, perhaps their friendship could never have been as fruitful as it was. Part of the interest and importance of the present essay stems from the fact that it represents Schiller's attempt to come to terms with Goethe's attitude to literature and to persuade him of the validity of his own.

This process began almost immediately after the famous meeting in Jena in 1794, as is shown by a long letter to Goethe dated 23 August 1794. The amazing distance which has already been travelled in the relationship between the two men is made clear when one bears in mind that this is just two months after the first formal letter announcing the founding of *Die Horen*. Schiller begins: 'My recent conversations with you have set the whole mass of my ideas in motion, for they concerned a subject which has occupied me for several years. The contemplation of your spirit (for so I must call the

total impression of your ideas on me) has unexpectedly illuminated for me many things which I could not decide about myself. I lacked the object, the substance, for several speculative ideas and you put me on the track of them. Your observing gaze which rests on things so quietly and purely never puts you in danger of straying onto that byway where speculation as well as the arbitrary imagination, obedient only to itself, goes so easily astray . . .’ Schiller then attempts a lengthy analysis of Goethe’s character and creative method which he sums up by saying: ‘This is roughly how I judge the progress of your spirit and you yourself will know best whether I am right. What, however, you can scarcely know (because genius is always the greatest mystery to itself) is the wonderful harmony between your philosophical instinct and the purest results of speculative reason. At a first glance it indeed appears as though there could be no greater opposites than the speculative spirit and the intuitive spirit which take as their starting-point unity and diversity respectively. If, however, the former seeks the empirical with a chaste and faithful heart, and the latter the law with the free and spontaneous power of thought, then neither can fail to meet the other halfway. Of course the intuitive spirit is only concerned with individuals and the speculative spirit only with types. However, if the intuitive spirit is a genius and if in the empirical he looks for the characteristics of necessity, then he will indeed always produce individuals but with the characteristics of the type and if the speculative spirit is a genius and if, in elevating himself above it, he does not lose touch with experience, then he will indeed always produce only types but with the possibility of life and with a well-founded relationship to real objects. But I see that instead of a letter I am in the process of writing an essay—’. The essay which he did write is, of course, the present one, *On the Naive and Sentimental in Literature*.

The first idea for the essay had come to him already in 1793. ‘I’m going to write a little treatise on the naive’, he wrote to his friend Körner on 4 Oct. 1793. However, we do not hear of him actually working on it until almost a year later, when, in another letter to Körner dated 4 Sept. 1794, he states that he has taken up work on his ‘essay on the naive’. The impetus for this was, of course, his meeting with Goethe the previous month. We see from Schiller’s letters that, once begun, the work proceeded apace, for on 12 Sept. he tells Körner

that the essay 'on nature and naiveté' was coming along well. It was another year, however, before the essay was completed. It finally appeared in *Die Horen* in 3 parts, in Nov. and Dec. 1795 and Jan. 1796.

'Little treatises on the naive' were by no means uncommon in the eighteenth century. Of the German discussions of the term two of the best-known are those by Moses Mendelssohn in *Betrachtungen über das Erhabene und das Naive in den schönen Wissenschaften* (*Considerations on the Sublime and the Naive in the Humanities*—1758 and in an expanded version 1771) and Johann Georg Sulzer's article on the naive in his *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste* (*General Theory of the Arts*—1771-74). Kant also took up the theme in paragraph 54 of *The Critique of Judgment* (1790). Writers like Mendelssohn and Sultzer proceed by referring to the noble simplicity inherent in the naive, its freedom from the taint of art or artifice and, because of this, its potential descent into the ridiculous. Schiller is attempting something much more complex. He writes to Wilhelm von Humboldt on 26 Oct. 1795 that the whole essay *On the Naive and Sentimental in Literature* is an attempt to answer the question: 'Given my distance from the spirit of Greek literature, to what extent can I still be a poet and indeed a better poet than the extent of that distance seems to allow?' Since for him, as we shall see, Greek literature was naive, he is therefore saying: 'I am not a naive writer. How is it then that I can still be good?' Implicit in this is the further question (perhaps the most urgent one for Schiller): 'Does this mean that I am necessarily a worse writer than Goethe who is naive?'

In order to argue the matter out, he needed a term for the writer who was not naive, for himself, and what he chose was that puzzling word 'sentimental'. The German for this is 'sentimentalisch', a word not in the modern German language or only with reference to Schiller. In the eighteenth century 'sentimentalisch' was used as a variant of the foreign loan-word 'sentimental'. ('Sentimental' is still in use today in German with the same meaning as in English.) Neither in eighteenth century English nor in German did 'sentimental' have the negative connotation it has today but meant rather 'of the feelings, pertaining to sentiment' in a favourable sense. Schiller, however, gave it a unique meaning of his own which can be explained to a certain extent by looking at some of the synonyms both he and Goethe used for it.

We have already seen in the letter to Goethe of 23 August 1794 that Schiller divides writers into two groups, the intuitive and the speculative. It is clear that intuitive corresponds to naive and speculative to sentimental, so the ability to speculate, to reflect, to use reason rather than intuition is one aspect of the sentimental. In a letter to Humboldt dated 9 January 1796, as in the last part of the essay itself, Schiller mentions Realism and Idealism as the two types of personality which correspond to the literary characteristics of the naive and the sentimental. The realist (or the naive writer) thus bases his ideas on the real world around him, the idealist (or the sentimental writer) bases his on the ideal, on what he imagines the world should be.

Goethe, who was made party to Schiller's ideas as they emerged, has given us his version of the development of the two categories. In 1820 in *Einwirkung der neueren Philosophie* he writes: 'Our conversations were throughout productive or theoretical, usually both at once. He preached the gospel of freedom, I didn't want to see the rights of nature infringed . . . Because I . . . not only emphasised the excellence of the Greek type of literature and of a literature based on it and originating in it, but also exclusively allowed this type to be valid, so he was forced to think things out more precisely and it is to this conflict that we owe the essays (3) *On the Naive and Sentimental in Literature*. Both sorts of literature, though opposed to each other, were to acquiesce in mutually according each other equal rank. He hereby first laid the basis for the whole of the new aesthetics, since Hellenic or Romantic and whatever other synonyms may be invented can all be traced back to that work where the preponderance of real or ideal treatment was first discussed' (4). In one of his conversations with Eckermann dated 21 March 1830 Goethe returned once more to the genesis of Schiller's essay and the terms developed in it. He says testily: 'The concept of classical and romantic literature which is now spreading worldwide and is causing so many quarrels and divisions . . . emanated originally from Schiller and me. In literature I held to the principle of an objective procedure and only wanted to admit this as valid. Schiller, however, who worked quite subjectively, thought his way was the right one and in order to defend himself against me, he wrote the essay on naive and sentimental literature . . . ' We can thus see that terms

associated with the naïve are intuitive, Hellenic, classical, real and objective whereas the sentimental is linked with speculative, Romantic, ideal and subjective.

What are we to call 'naïv' and 'sentimentalisch' in English? A nineteenth-century translator chose 'simple' and 'sentimental' (5) (presumably because 'naïve' had already taken on a negative tinge whereas 'sentimental' had not). 'Sentimentive' has been put forward to render 'sentimentalisch' while W. F. Mainland (6) suggests 'reflective'. The present translator has chosen to remain with 'naïve' and 'sentimental' because the original title of the essay is so well known and because whatever terms are used need to be explained in any case. This is particularly true of translations of 'sentimentalisch'.

Schiller has often been taken to task for his use of terms (7). That he uses a word like 'nature' in several different senses in the essay is now a commonplace of Schiller criticism and is variously attributed to the serial publication of the essay, its relatively long gestation period, the popular educative purpose of *Die Horen* and just plain incompetence on Schiller's part. Some critics tick him off almost as though he were a careless undergraduate handing in an inadequately-prepared essay: 'the essay is vitiated by its optimistic and unhistorical view of human nature, by its erroneous statements about the ancient Greeks, by the elaborate apparatus of psychological faculties and capacities that it posits, and by the ambiguity of some of the key words on which the argument depends' (8). Clearly a B- student! The inconsistencies in terminology which irritate the scholarly mind will cease to do so if one bears in mind that the essay is not a statement of Schiller's views, cut and dried beforehand, but shows us rather the actual development of the ideas as they progress (9).

Let us look at this process. The essay begins with a discussion of the naïve, that is, the state of lost innocence, the vanished paradise of childhood for which man mourns. All genius, so says Schiller, must be naïve, yet we moderns, exiled by culture and artificiality from this early home where we were at one with nature, cannot, should not, go back. Any suggestion of a *retour à la nature* in the manner of Rousseau is rejected. Forced to leave our naïveté behind we become 'sentimental', i.e., divided from nature, no longer at one with it and conscious of this division. However, instead of weakly mourning our loss, we strive to recreate that oneness with nature

by means of the ideal. Thus the sentimental poet is attempting something far more difficult and challenging than the naive poet. Though the latter may achieve perfection in his goals, the failure to which the endeavours of the sentimental poet are ultimately doomed is more noble and more admirable. Schiller then goes on to stress that not all ancient poets are naive (10) and not all modern poets sentimental. Ovid for example is a sentimental poet while Molière, Shakespeare and Goethe are naive.

However, having made his distinction between naive and sentimental, Schiller then shows that sentimental poets react in one of two ways to the gulf between the actual world and the lost world of nature: either they mourn their loss, in which case they are elegiac poets, or they criticise the defects of the real world, in which case they are satirical poets. Each of these two types can again be divided into two—there is jocose and castigating satire on the one hand and on the other elegy and idyll. The elegy mourns the loss of nature and the ideal, while the idyll rejoices in creating a picture of nature and the ideal. Schiller makes it very plain that he is not talking about genres when he uses terms like satire, elegy and idyll, but *kinds of emotion* and is most emphatic on this point. A particular novel or play or poem can fit into any of these types according to the standpoint from which it is written.

Yet Schiller is not content to stop at the division of writers into two types. Ultimately he is striving for a union, a mutual collaboration between the two types. Having set up his thesis and antithesis, he wants to combine them into a synthesis. It is here, I think, that the full daring of his method becomes apparent. We have been talking so far as though the naive and sentimental were two opposed categories which can only be reconciled in a third. Schiller is more subtle than that, as Peter Szondi has pointed out in by far the most illuminating contribution on the essay to date (11). Szondi draws attention to one of Schiller's footnotes (Note 64 in the present edition) where reference is made to Kant's table of categories in paragraph eleven of *The Critique of Pure Reason*. Here Kant says in his 'second note' that 'the third category always [results] from the combination of the first with the second'. Schiller applies this method to his categories of the naive and the sentimental and, turning to those of his readers well-versed in contemporary philosophy, he

writes: 'For the reader who is testing this scientifically, let me remark that both modes of feeling, when thought of in their highest potentiality, are related to each other as the first and third categories are because the latter always comes into being by the first being combined with its exact opposite.' Having thus referred his reader to Kant, Schiller goes on: 'The opposite of naive feeling is namely the reflective understanding, and the sentimental mood is the result of the attempt to restore the substance of naive emotion even under the conditions of reflection. This would happen through the fulfilled ideal in which art again encounters nature. If one goes through the three concepts according to the categories, then one will always find nature, and the naive mood which corresponds to it, in the first, art as the suspension of nature through the reason working freely in the second and finally the ideal, in which a perfected art returns to nature in the third category.' It is clear from this note that the sentimental is not itself the opposite of the naive but is produced by the union of the naive with its opposite, the reflective understanding. Thus it is the sentimental which corresponds to 'the ideal, in which a perfected art returns to nature'. This is borne out by a passage in the text itself: 'Nature makes man one with himself, art separates and divides him, through the ideal he returns to that unity' (quoted from p.40 below). It is therefore paradoxically only by being sentimental that we moderns can regain naiveté. This justifies the position both of the sentimental poet Schiller and of the naive poet Goethe. As Szondi points out, it is obvious from Schiller's letter to Goethe of 23 August 1794, which as we know stands at the beginning of Schiller's work on this essay, that Schiller saw Goethe as a naive poet who can only remain so *by being sentimental* (12). Schiller writes: 'Had you been born a Greek, even only an Italian and had an exquisite nature and an idealising art surrounded you from the cradle upwards, then perhaps your path would have been shortened immeasurably, perhaps even been completely superfluous . . . But, since you were born a German, since your Grecian spirit was thrown into this Northern world, so there was no other choice open to you except either to become a Northern artist yourself or, with the assistance of the power of thought, to supply your imagination with that which reality denied to it and thus as it were from within and by rational means to give birth to your own Greece.' The picture we

are given here is not of the naive writer that Schiller elsewhere maintains Goethe to be but of a sentimental writer recreating the naive (Greece) which he has lost. This exactly corresponds to the process described in Note 64 of the essay where the naive combined with the understanding (what the letter calls 'the power of thought') produces the sentimental. In this way the seeming opposition between the naive and the sentimental, and therefore between Goethe and Schiller, is removed and the value judgment according to which the naive must necessarily be finer than the sentimental is no longer applicable (13).

In conclusion, we must refer briefly to the style of the essay. Schiller writes beautiful, clear, vigorous German. He *talks* to his reader, addressing him at times directly. Now and then flashes of sarcasm intrude as he cuts some meretricious contemporary down to size, the odd jagged phrase bears witness to the speed of composition, but on the whole the style is a perfect mirror of the clarity and force of the ideas it expresses and of the honesty of Schiller's purpose.

HELEN WATANABE-O'KELLY

A NOTE ON THE TRANSLATION

The essay *Ueber naive und sentimentalische Dichtung* first appeared in *Die Horen, eine Monatsschrift*, herausgegeben von Schiller. Vierter Band. Tübingen, in der J. G. Cottaischen Buchhandlung 1795. Erster Jahrgang. Eilftes Stück, pp.43-76; Zwölftes Stück, pp.1-55; Fünfter Band, Tübingen 1796, Erstes Stück, pp.75-122. It was then reprinted by Schiller with very few changes in *Kleinere prosaische Schriften*. Aus Mehrern Zeitschriften vom Verfasser selbst gesammelt und verbessert. Zweiter Theil. Leipzig 1800 bey Siegfried Crusius, pp.3-216. This translation is based on the 1800 version which can be found in *Schillers Werke*, Nationalausgabe, vol. 20, unter Mitwirkung von Helmut Koopmann herausgegeben von Benno von Wiese, Weimar pp.413-503. Schiller's inconsistencies in the quotation of the titles of literary works and italicisation, etc. have been kept in the translation. For the convenience of the reader, however, the long text has been broken up into sections which correspond to the development of Schiller's ideas.

NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

1. All translations from letters and other source material used in the introduction are by HWOK.
2. So called after the 'Horai', the Greek gods of the seasons.
3. Goethe says 'essays' because *On the Naive and Sentimental in Literature* originally appeared in three parts in *Die Horen*. See *A Note on the Translation* above for details.
4. Goethe's Werke, Hamburger Ausgabe, vol. XIII, Hamburg 1955, pp. 28-29.
5. Schiller, *Simple and Sentimental Poetry*, transl. anon., in *Essays Aesthetical and Philosophical*, London, 1879 (Bohn's Standard Library).
6. On p.xxviii of the Introduction to his edition of *Ueber naive und sentimentalische Dichtung* in Blackwell's German Texts series, Oxford 1957.
7. Among others by G. A. Wells, 'Schiller's View of Nature in *Ueber naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, LXV (1966) pp. 491-510, and Olive Sayce, 'Das Problem der Vieldeutigkeit in Schillers ästhetischer Terminologie, *Jahrbuch der deutschen Schillergesellschaft* VI (1962).
8. Wells, op.cit. p.491.
9. Mainland, op.cit., note 158, p.129, says: ' . . . we are *not* dealing with an academic critic . . . Schiller was first and foremost a dramatist—a tragic dramatist, whose habit and aim was to present human conflict gathering impetus and reaching its extreme intensity immediately before the triumph of the Ideal. This, I believe, is precisely what he has done in his essay.' See also Peter Szondi, 'Das Naive ist das Sentimentalische. Zur Begriffs-dialektik in Schillers Abhandlung', *Euphorion* LXVI (1972), pp. 174-206. On pp.204-205 of this article he writes: 'der Aufsatz [ist] kein System von Sätzen . . . , die auseinander folgen und einander nicht widersprechen, sondern das Dokument eines *work in progress* der Erkenntnis.'
10. For the modern reader, of course, ancient poets regarded by Schiller as naive would be sentimental, e.g., Homer, the Sanskrit poet Kalidasa, the minnesingers or the other poets mentioned by Schiller in his Note 64 below. This is not an obstacle if we bear in mind the synthesis between naive and sentimental which Schiller is concerned to make. See Introduction, p.15f.

11. Op. cit. See note 9 above.

12. See Szondi. op. cit. p.205.

13. For a fictional restatement, development and transmogrification of the ideas in the essay see John Le Carré's novel, *The Naive and Sentimental Lover*, London 1971. Also of interest to English readers is Friedrich Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters*, edited and translated with an Introduction, Commentary and Glossary of Terms by Elizabeth M. Wilkinson and L. A. Willoughby; parallel English and German text, Oxford 1967.

ON THE NAIVE AND SENTIMENTAL IN LITERATURE

THERE are moments in our life when we accord to nature in plants, minerals, animals, landscapes, as well as to human nature in children, in the customs of country people and of the primitive world, a sort of love and touching respect, not because it pleases our senses nor because it satisfies our intellect or taste (the opposite of both can often be the case) but merely *because it is nature*. Every sensitive person who is not wholly lacking in feeling experiences this when he wanders in the open air, when he lives in the country or lingers among the monuments of ancient times, in short, when in artificial conditions and situations he is surprised by a sight of simple nature. This interest, elevated quite often to a need, is what lies at the bottom of many of our fancies for flowers and animals, for simple gardens, for walks, for the country and its inhabitants, for many a product of distant antiquity and such like things; always presupposing that neither affectation nor any other accidental interest plays a part here. This sort of interest in nature, however, only comes to pass under two conditions. Firstly, it is absolutely necessary that the object which inspires it in us should be *natural* or at least should be held by us to be so; secondly, that it should (in the widest sense of the word) be *naive*, i.e., that nature should stand in contrast to art and put it to shame. As soon as the last is joined to the first and not before, the natural becomes the naive.

In this way of looking at things, nature for us is nothing other than voluntary existence, the continuation of things through themselves, existence according to its own unchangeable laws.

This concept is absolutely necessary if we are to take an interest in such phenomena. If one could give an artificial flower the appearance of nature so that it deceived completely, if one could push the imitation of the naive in manners and customs to the highest degree of illusion, then the discovery that it was imitation would completely destroy the feeling under discussion (1). From this it emerges that this sort of pleasure in nature is not an aesthetic but a moral one; for it is conveyed by means of an idea, not produced

directly by observation; nor is it governed at all by the beauty of natural forms. What could a modest flower, a spring, a mossy stone, the twittering of the birds, the humming of the bees, etc. have in themselves that would be so pleasing to us? What could give them a claim on our love, even? It is not these objects, it is an *idea* represented by them which we love in them. In them we love the calm, creative life, the quiet functioning from within themselves, the existence according to their own laws, the inner necessity, the eternal unty with themselves.

They *are* what we *were*; they are what we *should become* again. We were natural like them and our culture should lead us back to nature along the path of reason and freedom. They are, therefore, at the same time a representation of our lost childhood, which remains eternally most precious to us and thus they fill us with a certain sadness. At the same time they are representations of our highest perfection in the ideal, so that they transport us into a state of elevated emotion.

But their perfection is no merit of their own, since it is not the product of their own choice. They accord us, therefore, the quite singular pleasure of being our models without putting us to shame. As a constant divine manifestation they surround us, but more to revive than to dazzle. The essence of their character is exactly that which is lacking to the perfection of our own; what distinguishes us from them is exactly what is lacking to the divinity of theirs. We are free and they are necessary; we change, they remain one. But only when both are combined, one with another—when the will freely follows the law of necessity and when reason enforces its rules in spite of all the flux of the imagination, then the divine or the ideal emerges. *In them*, therefore, we eternally see what eludes us, but for which we are called upon to struggle and which we may hope to approach in a never-ending progression, although we never reach it. *In ourselves* we see a merit which they lack but which they can either never possess, like the unreasoning, or only if they travel on the same path *as us*, like children. They therefore provide us with the sweetest enjoyment of our humanity as an idea, even if they must necessarily humble themselves with regard to that *particular* condition of our humanity.

Since this interest in nature is based on an idea, it can only

manifest itself in dispositions which are receptive to ideas, i.e. in moral ones. By far the greatest number of people only affect it, and the commonness of this sentimental taste in our day, which especially since the appearance of certain works expresses itself in sentimental journeys, sentimental gardens, walks and other fancies of this kind, is no proof of the commonness of this type of sentiment. Yet nature will always impress something of this effect even on the most insensitive, because that *predisposition* towards the moral which is common to all men conduces to it, and no matter how distant our *deeds* are from the simplicity and truth of nature we are all without exception impelled towards it *in the idea*. This sensitivity to nature is called forth especially strongly and in the most general way by those objects, for example children and childlike races, which stand in close connection with us and which encourage us to look at ourselves and what is *unnatural* in us. We are wrong if we think that it is merely the idea of helplessness which causes us in certain moments to linger among children with so much emotion. This may perhaps be the case with those who never feel anything else in the face of weakness except their own superiority. But the feeling of which I speak (it is only to be found in particular moral moods and is not to be confused with that which is evoked in us by the cheerful activity of children), rather humbles than flatters one's self-love; and even if there is a merit to be considered here, then it is not on our side. Not because we look down on the child from the height of our strength and perfection but because, from the *limitation* of our condition which is inseparable from the *determination* which we have reached, we *look up* to the limitless *indeterminable nature* of the child and to his pure innocence, we are moved and our emotion in such a moment is too obviously mingled with a certain sadness to allow us to mistake its source. The child represents *disposition* and *destiny*, we represent the *fulfilment* which always lags immeasurably far behind the former. For us, therefore, the child is a representation of the ideal, not the fulfilled but the abandoned one, and it is therefore in no way the concept of his insufficiency and limitations, it is on the contrary the concept of his pure, free strength, of his wholeness, of his boundlessness which touches us. To the moral and sensitive person for this reason the child will become a *sacred* object, an object which, by the power of an idea, destroys any

power of experience and which will richly regain when judged by reason what it has lost when judged by common sense.

From just this contradiction between judgments of reason and common sense proceeds the unique phenomenon of the mixed feeling which is aroused in us by the *naive* way of thinking. It connects *child-like* and *childish* simplicity; through the latter it exposes itself to the common sense and calls forth that smile by which we bear witness to our (*theoretical*) superiority. As soon, however, as we have cause to believe that the childish simplicity is at the same time a child-like one, that consequently not lack of understanding, not lack of ability but a higher (*practical*) strength, a heart full of innocence and truth is the source of it, a heart which despised the assistance of art from an inner greatness, then that triumph of the common sense is over, and mockery of foolishness turns into admiration of simplicity. We feel compelled to respect the object at which we previously smiled and, by taking a look into ourselves at the same time, to accuse ourselves of not being the same. In this way the unique phenomenon of an emotion which unites cheerful mockery, respect and sadness comes into existence (2). It is a prerequisite of the naive that nature is victorious over art (3), whether this happens without the knowledge and will of the person or in the full consequence of it. In the first case it is the naiveté of *surprise* and causes merriment; in the second it is the naiveté of disposition and moves one.

In the naiveté of surprise, the person must be *morally* capable of denying nature, in the naiveté of disposition he should not be so, yet we should not imagine him as *physically* incapable of it if it is to affect us as naive. The actions and speech of children, therefore, only give the pure impression of the naive as long as we do not remember their inability in the realm of art and only take account of the contrast between their naturalness and artificiality. The naive is a *childlike quality where it is no longer expected* and cannot therefore be attributed in the strictest sense to real childhood.

However, in both cases, in the naiveté of surprise as well as in the naiveté of disposition, nature must be right, art wrong.

Only with this last statement is the definition of the naive complete. Emotion is natural too and the rules of decorum are something artificial; yet the victory of emotion over decorum is not at all

naive. If on the other hand the same emotion conquers affectation, false decorum, pretence, then we have no hesitation in calling it naive (4). It is therefore necessary that nature should not triumph over art through its blind power as a *dynamic* force but through its form as a *moral* force, in short, that it should triumph over art as an *inner necessity* not as an *outward need*. Not the *inadequacy* but the *invalidity* of art must have given nature the prize, for inadequacy is a deficiency and nothing which springs from a deficiency can call forth respect. Though in the case of the naiveté of surprise it is always the predominance of emotion and a *lack* of recollection which causes nature to betray itself, yet this lack and that predominance by no means constitute the naive by themselves but merely give nature an opportunity to follow *its moral disposition*, i.e. *to follow the law of harmony unbindered*.

The naiveté of surprise can only come to man and to man alone in so far as he is no longer in that moment a pure and innocent nature. It presupposes a will which is not in harmony with what nature does on its own account. Such a person, when you bring him to reflect, will be startled at himself; the person of *naive disposition* on the contrary will wonder at people and their astonishment. Since therefore not the personal and moral character but merely the natural character, set free by emotion, acknowledges the truth here, so we give the person no credit for this honesty and our laughter is well-deserved mockery which is not held back by any personal esteem we have for that person. Because, however, it is the honesty of nature which here too breaks through the veil of falsity, then a satisfaction of a higher kind is connected with the malice of having caught someone out; for nature in opposition to affectation and truth in opposition to deception must excite respect at all times. At the naiveté of surprise we therefore also feel a truly moral satisfaction, although not at a moral character (5).

In the case of the naiveté of surprise we always indeed respect *nature* because we must respect truth; with the naiveté of intention on the other hand we respect the *person* and therefore enjoy not merely a moral satisfaction but also satisfaction at a moral object. In the one case as in the other, nature is *right* to say the truth; but in the latter case nature is not just right, the person is also *honourable*. In the first case the honesty of nature always brings shame to the

person because it is involuntary; in the second it always brings him honour, even if what it expresses would have brought him shame.

We attribute a naive disposition to a person when, in his judgments of things, he overlooks their affected and artificial circumstances and merely clings to their simple nature. We demand of him all the judgments of healthy nature and only exempt him from that which presupposes a distance from nature, whether in thought or feeling, or at least a knowledge of that distance.

When a father tells his child that this or that man is dying of poverty and the child goes and takes the poor man his father's purse, then this act is naive; for healthy nature acted in the child and, in a world where healthy nature was dominant, it would have been perfectly right to have acted in this way. It only sees the need and the nearest means of satisfying it; such an extension of the right of property, whereby a portion of mankind can perish, is not based on nature alone. The action of the child, therefore, shames the real world and our heart admits this by the pleasure which it feels at that action.

If a person without knowledge of the world, but otherwise of good understanding, confesses his secrets to another who is deceiving him but who hides this skilfully, and if the first, through his honesty, himself gives him the means to harm him, then we find that naive. We laugh at him but cannot prevent ourselves for honouring him for it. For his trust in the other comes from the honesty of his own disposition; at least, he is only naive in so far as this is the case.

A naive way of thinking can, therefore, never be a characteristic of corrupt people but only of children and of people of childlike disposition. These last often act and think in a naive way in the midst of the artificial relationships of the great wide world; because of their own noble humanity they forget that they are dealing with a depraved world and even at the courts of kings behave with an ingenuousness and innocence such as is only to be found in a pastoral world.

Furthermore, it is not all that easy to distinguish correctly between childish and childlike innocence, as there are actions which hover on the extreme boundary between the two and where we are completely in doubt as to whether we should laugh at the

foolishness or esteem the noble simplicity. A most remarkable example of this kind is to be found in the history of Pope Hadrian VI's reign, written by Mr. Schröckh (6) with that thoroughness and competent truth characteristic of him. This pope, a Dutchman by birth, was pontiff at one of the most critical moments for the hierarchy, when an embittered faction had exposed the deficiencies of the Roman church without mercy and the opposing faction was concerned in the highest degree to cover them up. There is no question as to what the truly naive character, if such a one should stray onto the throne of St. Peter, should do in this case; it is questionable, however, as to how far such naiveté is compatible with the role of a pope. This, however, had caused Hadrian's predecessors and successors the least embarrassment. With unanimity they followed the Roman system, once and for all adopted, of not conceding anything in any area. But Hadrian really had the straightforward character of his nation and the innocence of his former calling. From the narrow sphere of the scholar he had risen to his elevated position and even at the height of his new dignity he had not become untrue to that simple character. The false practices of the church touched him and he was much too honest to conceal in public what he admitted to himself in private. In conformity with his way of thinking, in the *brief* which he gave his legates to Germany he let himself be betrayed into making admissions which were unheard of from any pope and which ran counter to the principles of the court. 'We know well,' he said among other things, 'that much that is repugnant has been occurring on this throne for many years: no wonder if the illness has been bequeathed by the head to the limbs, by the pope to the prelates. We have all fallen away and for a long time there has been no one among us who has done anything good, not even one.' Again in another place, he orders the legate to declare in his name that he, Hadrian, should not be blamed for what has been done by the popes before him and that such excesses had always displeased him, even when he had had a lesser position, and so on. One can easily think how such naiveté from the pope was received by the Roman clergy; the least of which he was accused was that he had betrayed the church to the heretics. This very unwise step by the pope would, however, be worthy of our entire respect and admiration if we could only convince ourselves

that he had really been naive, i.e. that he was forced to do it by the natural truth of his character without any regard for the possible consequences, and that he would have done it equally if he had grasped the impropriety committed in all its implications. But we have some cause to believe that he did not hold this step to be all that impolitic and in his innocence went so far as to hope that, by his yielding to his opponents, something very important had been won to the advantage of his church. He not only imagined that he had to take this step as an honest man, but that as a pope he could also vindicate it, and by forgetting that the most artificial of all structures can be held up only by a continued denial of the truth, he committed the unforgivable mistake of following, in a quite contrary position, rules of conduct which would have stood the test in natural circumstances. This, however, changes our judgment greatly; and although we cannot withhold our respect for his integrity of heart, yet this is weakened not a little by the consideration that nature had too weak an opponent in art and the heart in the head.

Every true genius, in order to be one, must be naive. It is his naiveté alone which makes him a genius and what he is in the intellectual and aesthetic field he cannot avoid being in the moral field. Unacquainted with the rules, the crutches of weakness and the taskmasters of affectation, guided only by nature or instinct, his guardian angel, he moves calmly and surely through all the snares of false taste in which he who is not a genius, if he is not clever enough to avoid them from afar, remains inevitably entangled. It is only vouchsafed to the genius to be always at home outside of what is familiar to him and to *extend* nature without *going outside* it. The latter does indeed happen at times to the greatest geniuses, but only because even these have their fantastic moments where protective nature abandons them, because the power of example carries them away or the decadent taste of their time leads them astray.

The most complex tasks must be solved by the genius with undemanding simplicity and ease; the story of Columbus and the egg (7) applies to every decision of genius. In this way alone genius justifies itself as such, by triumphing over complex art by means of simplicity. It does not proceed according to known principles but according to sudden notions and feelings; but its sudden notions

are inspirations from a god (everything that healthy nature does is divine), its feelings are laws for all periods and for all races of people.

The child-like character which the genius imprints on his works manifests itself also in his private life and in his morals. He is *bashful* because nature always is so, but he is not *prudish* because only decadence is prudish. He is *sensible* because nature can never be the opposite, but he is not *cunning* because only art can be that. He is *faithful* to his character and his inclinations but not only because he has principles but also because nature, with all its deviations, always returns to its previous position, always returns with the same need. He is *modest*, even foolish, because genius always remains a secret to itself, but he is not fearful because he does not know the dangers of the path on which he travels. We know little about the private life of the greatest geniuses, but the little which has been handed down to us about, for example, *Sophocles*, *Archimedes*, *Hippocrates* and, from more recent times, about *Ariosto* (8), *Dante* and *Tasso* (9), about *Raphael*, *Albrecht Dürer*, *Cervantes*, *Shakespeare*, about *Fielding* (10), *Sterne* (11) and others confirms this statement.

What seems to contain much more difficulty is that even great statesmen and generals, as soon as they have become great by means of their genius, will exhibit a naive character. I only want to remind you here of *Epaminondas* and *Julius Caesar* among the ancients, of *Henri IV* of France, *Gustavus Adolfus* of Sweden and *Tsar Peter the Great* among the more recent. The Dukes of *Marlborough*, *Turenne* and *Vendome* all exhibit this character to us. Nature has given the opposite sex its highest perfection in the naive character. The female desire to please strives after nothing so much as after the *appearance of naïveté*, proof enough, if one had no other, that the greatest power of the sex lies in this quality. Because, however, the dominant principles in female education are in constant conflict with this character, it is as hard for the woman in the moral field as for the man in the intellectual field to preserve that wonderful gift of nature together with the advantages of a good education, and the *woman* who combines this naïveté in morals with a polished bearing in society is just as worthy of respect as the scholar who combines the freedom of thought of a genius with all the strictness of the academy.

From the naive way of thinking there flows necessarily a naive

way of expressing oneself, in words as well as in movements, and it is the most important component of grace. With this naive grace the genius expresses his most lofty and most profound thoughts, they are the utterances of a god from the mouth of a child. When the academic mind, always afraid of a mistake, nails its words, like its concepts, to the cross of grammar and logic, is hard and stiff in order above all not to be vague, utters many words in order above all not to say too much, and prefers to take the strength and sharpness from the idea so that it does not cut the careless, the genius, with one single happy brush-stroke, gives his idea an eternally fixed, firm and yet quite free outline. If there the term will always seem of a different kind from what is being referred to, then here the language leaps from the idea as through an inner necessity and is so much at one with it, that even underneath the corporeal covering the spirit stands revealed. This kind of expression, where the term completely vanishes in what is being referred to and where speech leaves the thought which it expresses as it were naked, while the other type can never represent it without at the same time concealing it, this is what in style one calls above all inspired and the work of genius.

Like genius in the works of the spirit, innocence of heart expresses itself freely and naturally in lively social intercourse. It is well known that in social life one has departed from simplicity and the strict truth of expression in the same degree that one has departed from the simplicity of convictions, and easily conquered guilt, as well as the easily seduced imagination, have made a timid decency necessary. Without being untruthful, one often speaks differently from how one thinks; one has to employ circumlocution in order to say things which could only give pain to an unhealthy self-love and could only bring danger to a corrupt imagination. An ignorance of these laws of convention together with a natural integrity which despises every twist and every appearance of falsehood (not boorishness which sets them aside because they are a nuisance to it), produce a naiveté of expression in social intercourse which consists of calling things by their right name and in the most concise way which one may not name at all, or only artificially. The usual expressions of children are of this type. They excite laughter by their contrast with manners, yet one will always admit in one's heart that the child is right.

The naiveté of disposition can, strictly speaking, only be attributed to man as a being not absolutely subject to nature, although only in so far as pure nature really still acts in him; but through an effect of the poeticising imagination, it is often transferred from the rational to the unreasoning. Thus we often ascribe to an animal, a landscape, a building, even to all nature in contrast to the arbitrariness and the fantastic ideas of man, a naive character. This, however, always demands that we, in our thoughts, provide what has no will with a will and notice its strict organisation according to the law of necessity. The dissatisfaction over our own badly-used moral freedom and the lack of moral harmony in our own actions easily puts us into a mood in which we address the inanimate like a person and, as though it had really had to fight a temptation towards the opposite, we make a virtue out of its eternal sameness and envy its calm demeanour. In such a moment, we tend to consider the privilege of our reason a curse and an evil and, because of a lively feeling of the imperfection of our real achievements, we lose from sight a sense of justice towards our disposition and destiny.

We then see in irrational nature only a happier sister who remained behind in the parental home from which we rushed forth to foreign climes, in the arrogant high spirits of our freedom. With a painful longing we wish we were back there as soon as we begin to experience the afflictions of culture, and in the distant exile of art we hear the touching voice of our mother. As long as we were mere children of nature, we were happy and perfect; we have become free and have lost both. From this emerges a double and very unequal longing for nature, a longing for her *happiness* and a longing for her *perfection*. Only the sensual person laments the loss of the former. Only the moral person laments the loss of the latter.

Ask yourself therefore, tenderhearted friend of nature, whether your laziness thirsts for her peace, whether your offended moral code thirsts for her harmony? Ask yourself carefully, when art disgusts you and the abuses of society drive you to inanimate nature in solitude, whether it is society's deprivations, burdens and trials, or whether it is her moral anarchy, her arbitrariness, her disorder which you loathe in her. Your courage must throw itself joyfully into the former and your reward must be the very freedom from which they come. You may indeed set quiet happiness in

nature up as a distant goal but only that happiness which is the reward of your worthiness. Therefore no complaints about the difficulty of life, about the inequality of conditions, about the pressure of circumstances, about the uncertainty of possession, about ingratitude, oppression, persecution; you must submit to all the *evils* of culture with voluntary resignation, you must respect them as the natural conditions of the sole Good; you must lament only the *evil* in it but not merely with weak tears. Take care rather that you act purely in the midst of that defilement, freely under that slavery, steadfastly under that capricious change, lawfully in the midst of that anarchy. Do not be afraid of the confusion around you but only of the confusion within you; strive for unity but do not seek it in monotony; strive for peace but through equilibrium, not by a cessation of activity. That nature for which you envy the unreasoning is not worthy of any respect, any longing. It lies behind you, it must always lie behind you. Abandoned by the ladder which carried you, there is now no other choice open to you than to seize the law consciously and voluntarily or to sink without hope of salvation into a bottomless pit.

But when you are comforted over the lost *happiness* of nature, then let her *perfection* serve your heart as a model. When you step out to her from your artificial circle, and she stands before you in her great stillness, in her naive beauty, in her childlike innocence and simplicity, then linger before this picture, cultivate this feeling; it is worthy of your best humanity. Think no more of *changing places* with her but receive her into yourself and strive to wed her endless superiority to your endless privilege and from the two conceive the divine. Let her surround you like a delightful *idyll* in which you always find yourself again after the aberrations of art, in which you gather courage and new confidence for the race and kindle anew in your heart the flame of the *ideal* which extinguishes itself so easily in the storm of life.

When one remembers the beauties of nature which surrounded the ancient Greeks; when one considers how intimately this people could live under its happy sky with free nature, how much nearer its way of imagining things, its way of feeling, its customs lay to simple nature and what a true impression of it its literary works are, then one is unpleasantly surprised to notice that one meets with so

few signs of the *sentimental* interests with which we moderns cling to natural scenes and natural characters. The Greek is indeed in the highest degree exact, faithful, detailed in the description of nature, but yet no more and with no greater participation of the heart than in the description of a costume, a shield, a suit of armour, a household utensil or any mechanical product. In his love for the object he seems to make no difference between what exists through itself and what exists through art and the human will. Nature seems more to interest his understanding and his desire for knowledge than his moral sense; he does not cling with inwardness, with emotion, with sweet sorrow to her as we moderns do. Indeed, by personifying and deifying her individual phenomena and representing her effects as the actions of free beings, he does away with her calm necessity which is just what makes her so attractive to us. His impatient imagination carries him on past her to the drama of human life. Only what is alive and free, only characters, actions, fates and morals satisfy him and if *we* can wish in certain moral moods to substitute for the superiority of our freedom of will, which exposes us to so many struggles with ourselves, to so much unease and confusion, the choiceless but calm necessity of the irrational, the imagination of the Greek is preoccupied on the contrary with seeing the beginning of human nature already in the inanimate world and with seeing the influence of the will where blind necessity reigns.

Where does this dissimilarity of spirit come from? How does it come to pass that we, who are so immeasurably surpassed in everything that is nature by the ancients, at just this point can pay homage to nature to a higher degree, cling to her with fervour and embrace even the inanimate world with the warmest emotion? It comes *from this*, that nature for us has vanished from humanity and we only meet it in its true form outside of humanity in the inanimate world. Not our greater *accord with nature*, quite on the contrary our *opposition to nature* in our relationships, circumstances and customs, drives us to seek a satisfaction in the physical world which is not to be hoped for in the moral world, for the awakening desire for truth and simplicity which, like the moral disposition from which it comes, lies incorruptible and ineradicable in every human heart. For this reason, the feeling with which we

cling to nature is so closely related to the feeling with which we lament the vanished age of childhood and childlike innocence. Our childhood is the only un mutilated piece of nature which we can still find in civilised humanity and therefore it is no wonder if every footprint of nature outside ourselves leads us back to our childhood.

It was very different with the ancient Greeks' (12). With them culture had not degenerated so much that nature was abandoned for it. The whole structure of their social life was built on feelings, not on the inferior construction of art; even their theology was the inspiration of a naive feeling, the product of a happy imagination, not of brooding reason, as is the ecclesiastical belief of more modern nations. Since, therefore, the Greeks had not lost nature in humanity, they could not be astonished by it outside of humanity and had no such urgent need for objects in which they found it again. United with themselves and happy in the feeling of their humanity, they had to stop at humanity as their highest value and try to bring everything else nearer to it, while *we*, in discord with ourselves and unhappy in our experience of humanity, have no more urgent interest than to flee out of it and to remove such an unsuccessful form from our eyes.

The feeling of which we are speaking here is, therefore, not that which the ancients had; it is rather one with that which we have *for the ancients*. They felt in a natural way, we feel the Natural. It was without doubt a quite different feeling which filled Homer's soul when he had his divine swineherd play host to Ulysses, from that which moved the soul of the young Werther (13) when he read those verses after an irritating social gathering. Our feeling for nature is like that of the feeling of the sick man for health.

Just as nature began gradually to vanish from human life as *experience* and as the (active and feeling) *subjectivity*, so we see it emerge in the world of the poet as an *idea* and as *subject-matter*. That nation which has gone farthest towards unnaturalness and the consciousness of it would have to be the first to be touched the most strongly by the phenomenon of the *naive* and the first to put a name to it. This nation was, as far as I know, the *French*. But the experience of the naive and the interest in it is naturally much older and dates already from the beginning of moral and aesthetic corruption. This change in the kind of emotion is, for example,

already very striking in *Euripides* when you compare him with his predecessors, especially with Aeschylus, and yet the former poet was the darling of his time. The same revolution can be shown among the ancient *historians*. *Horace*, the poet of a civilised and corrupt era, praises the calm contentment of his Tivoli and one could call him the true founder of this type of sentimental poetry, just as he is still the unsurpassed model for it. In *Propertius* and *Virgil*, among others, we also find traces of this way of feeling, less in *Ovid* who lacked the fullness of heart for it and who in his exile in Tomi misses painfully the contentment which Horace did without so gladly in his Tivoli.

Poets everywhere are by definition the *preservers* of nature. Where they can no longer be so completely and already experience in themselves the destructive influence of arbitrary and artificial forms or have even had to fight against them, then they appear as the *witnesses* and the *avengers* of nature. They therefore will either *be* nature or they will *look for* lost nature. From this stem two quite different types of poetry, by which the whole poetic territory is exhausted and measured. All poets who really are poets, according to the nature of the period in which they flourish or according to what accidental circumstances have an influence on their general education and on their passing mental state, will belong either to the *naïve* or the *sentimental* type.

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The poet of a naïve and clever youthful world, like him who in eras of artificial culture approaches him most nearly, is severe and reserved like the virgin Diana in her woods; without any intimacy he flees the heart which seeks him, the desire which wants to embrace him. The dry truth with which he treats his subject often appears insensitive. The subject possesses him utterly, his heart does not lie like base metal just under the surface but needs like gold to be sought for in the depths. As the godhead stands behind the edifice of the world, so does he stand behind his creation, *he* is the creation and the creation is *he*, one has to be unworthy of the creation, not strong enough for it or tired of it even to look for the creator.

This is how, for example, *Homer* among the ancients and *Shakespeare* among the moderns appear, two very different natures,

separated by the immeasurable distance of their eras but in this characteristic completely one. When I first became acquainted with Shakespeare at a very early age, I was shocked by his coldness, the lack of feeling which allowed him to joke in the midst of the greatest pathos, to break up the heart-rending scenes in *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth* etc., by the introduction of a fool, which at times stopped him where my emotions rushed on, at times bore him cold-heartedly on where the heart would gladly have paused. Misled by my acquaintance with more modern poets to look first of all in the work for the author, to encounter *his* heart, to reflect on his subject-matter together *with him*, in short to look for the subject-matter in the person, it was unbearable to me that here the poet could nowhere be grasped, was nowhere answerable to me. He had already possessed my entire admiration and had been my study for several years before I learned to love his personality. I was not yet capable of understanding nature at first hand. I could only bear her image filtered by the understanding and ordered by rules, and for this the sentimental French and also German writers of the years 1750 to approximately 1780 were just the right subjects. However, I am not ashamed of this childish judgment, since critics well on in years formed a similar one and were naive enough to publish it to the world.

The same thing happened to me too with Homer, whom I got to know in an even later period. I can remember now the remarkable passage in the sixth book of the *Iliad* where Glaucus and Diomedes meet in the fight and after they have recognised each other as friends linked by the bonds of hospitality, they give each other presents. One could compare this touching picture of the piety with which the laws of *hospitality* were observed even in war with a depiction of *chivalrous magnanimity* in Ariosto where two knights and rivals in love, *Ferrau* and *Rinaldo* (14), one a Christian, the other a Saracen, make peace, covered with wounds after a vehement fight, and mount the same horse in order to catch up with the fleeing Angelica. Both examples, different as they may otherwise seem, resemble each other almost exactly in their effect on our heart because both portray the noble triumph of morals over passion and move us by the naiveté of their convictions. But how differently the poets comport themselves in the description of this similar event!

Ariosto, the citizen of a later world which has fallen away from simple morals, cannot hide his own wonder, his emotion, as he narrates this incident. The feeling of the distance between those morals and the morals of his own era overpowers him. Suddenly he abandons the portrayal of his subject and appears in his own person. The beautiful stanza is well known and has always been particularly admired:

O nobility of ancient knightly ways!
They who were rivals, separated too
By their beliefs, still suffering bitter pain
In their whole bodies from the combat fierce,
Free of suspicion and in close accord,
They rode along the dark and crooked path.
Their steed, urged by two pairs of spurs, rushed on
Until the path divided in two roads. (15)

And now for ancient Homer! Scarcely has Diomedes discovered from the story of Glaucus, his opponent, that he has enjoyed the hospitality of his family since his father's time than he sticks his lance into the earth, speaks kindly to him and arranges with him that they will avoid each other in future in the fray. Let Homer himself speak:

Therefore from now on I will be your host in Argos,
You mine in Lycia whenever I visit that land.
Therefore let us avoid each other's lances in the fray.
There are so many Trojans and their noble allies
That I can kill whomever God sends me and I have the speed
to reach.
There are enough Achaeans for you to lay low if you can.
But let us exchange armour that the others too
Can see that we boast of our friendship from the days of
our fathers.

Thus they spoke, leaping down from their chariots,
They each grasped the other's hand and swore friendship.

A *modern* poet would hardly have waited even until here (or at least one who is a poet in the moral sense of the word) to announce his joy at this action. We would forgive him for it all the more easily, in that our hearts pause too while reading and like to distance themselves from the subject-matter in order to look inwards.

But there is no trace of all this in Homer. As though he had reported an everyday occurrence, indeed as though he himself had no heart in his breast, he continues in his dry, truthful way:

But Zeus moved Glaucus so that without thinking
He exchanged armour with the hero Diomedes, golden
for bronze,

Armour worth a hundred bullocks for armour worth nine. (16)

Poets of this naive type are no longer really in place in an artificial era. Neither are they possible any longer in such an era or at least only possible in so far as they *fail to conform* to their age and are protected by a favourable destiny from its mutilating influence. They can never emerge as part of society but sometimes they appear outside of it, rather as outsiders whom one wonders at and badly-brought up sons of nature at whom one is annoyed. Though they are refreshing figures for the artist who studies them and for the real connoisseur who knows how to appreciate them, yet they do not get on well on the whole and in their epoch. The seal of a ruler rests on their forehead; we on the other hand want to be cradled and carried by the muses. They are hated by the critics, the actual border guards of taste, as *boundary breakers* who should rather be suppressed. For even Homer has the strength of the witness of more than a thousand years to thank that these guardians of good taste approve of him. They find it a bitter enough task to have to maintain their rules in the face of his prestige and his prestige in the face of their rules.

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The poet, as I have said, either *is* nature or he will *seek* it. The former constitutes the naive, the second the sentimental poet.

The poetic spirit is immortal and inalienable in humanity. It can be lost in no other way than together with humanity and with the disposition to it. For if man distances himself through the freedom of his fantasy and his understanding from the simplicity, truth and necessity of nature, then not only is the way back to nature always open but a powerful and ineradicable drive, the moral drive, impels him increasingly back to it, and it is with this drive that the poetic gift stands in the closest relationship. This, therefore, is not lost

at the same time as natural simplicity but simply takes effect in another direction.

Now, too, nature is still the only flame at which the poetic spirit is kindled. From nature alone it draws its whole power, to nature alone it speaks even in the artificial man involved in culture. Every other kind of effect is foreign to the poetic spirit. Therefore, by the way, all so-called works of wit are quite wrongly called poetic, although we have confused the two for a long time, led astray by French literature. Nature, I say, is still now, in the artificial state of culture, the force by which the poetic spirit is powerful; only that it now has quite a different relationship to nature.

As long as man consists of pure, not of course of crude, nature, then he gives the impression of an undivided sensual unit and of a harmonious whole. The senses and the reason, the receptive and the spontaneous capacity, have not yet separated in their function, much less are they in opposition to each other. His emotions are not the formless play of accident, his thoughts are not the meaningless play of the imagination; the former proceed from the law of *necessity*, the latter from *reality*. If man has entered into a state of culture and if art has placed her hand on him, then that *sensual* harmony has been removed from him and he can only express himself as a *moral* unit, i.e., as someone striving for unity. The correspondence between his feeling and his thinking which existed *in reality* in the first state, now only exists *as an ideal*; it is no longer in him but outside of him, as an idea which must first be realised, no longer as a fact of his life. If one now applies the concept of poetry, which means nothing else than *to give humanity its most complete expression possible*, to both of these states, then in the state of natural simplicity, where man still functions together with all his powers as a harmonious unit, where the whole of his nature expresses itself completely in reality, the result is that the most complete possible *imitation of the real* must constitute the poet—that, on the other hand, here in the state of culture where that harmonious co-operation of his whole nature is merely an idea, it is the elevation of reality to the ideal or, what comes to the same thing, the *representation of the ideal which must make the poet*. And these are the two sole possible ways in which the poetic spirit can ever express itself. They are, as one can see, extremely different from

each other, but there is a higher concept which subsumes both of them and it should not surprise us when this concept coincides with the idea of humanity.

Here is not the place to pursue this idea which can only be displayed in its full light by a separate discussion. He who knows how to institute a comparison between ancient and modern poets (17) according to some spiritual criterion and not just according to accidental forms will easily be able to convince himself of the truth of it. The older poets touch us through nature, through sensual truth, through the living present; the modern ones touch us through ideas.

This path on which the modern poets are moving is, moreover, the same one on which man individually and mankind as a whole must travel. Nature makes him one with himself, art separates and divides him, through the ideal he returns to that unity. Because, however, the ideal is an infinite one which he never attains, the cultivated man can never become perfect in *his* own way as the natural man is able to do in his. He would, therefore, necessarily be immeasurably inferior to the latter in perfection if one were only to consider the relationship of both to their type and to their maximum potential. If, on the other hand, one compares the types themselves with each other, then it emerges that the goal for which man *strives* through culture is immeasurably preferable to that which he *reaches* through nature. One, therefore, has his value because of his absolute attainment of a finite greatness, the other because of his approximation to an infinite one. However, because only the latter has *degrees* and a *progression*, then the relative value of him who is caught up in culture is on the whole never determinable, although looked at individually he must always find himself at a disadvantage compared to him in whom nature is functioning in all her perfection. In so far, however, as the ultimate goal of humanity cannot be reached except by means of that progression and the natural man cannot progress except by cultivating himself and as a result merges with the former, then there is no question as to which of the two deserves greater merit with regard to that ultimate goal.

What has been said here of two different forms of humanity can also be applied to the two types of poet which correspond to them.

For this reason we should have compared ancient and modern—naive and sentimental—poets either not at all or under a common but higher category (there really is such a one). For indeed if one has previously derived the definition of poetry one-sidedly from the ancient poets, then nothing is easier, but also more trivial, than to disparage the moderns in comparison with them. If one only calls that poetry which at all times has the same effect on simple natures, then the result must be that one will have to deny to the modern poets the name of poet at exactly the moment of their most individual and most elevated beauty, because it is just here that they only speak to the pupil of art and have nothing to say to simple natures (18). He whose spirit is not already prepared to go beyond reality into the realm of ideas will find the richest content empty illusion and the highest poetic flight exaggeration. It cannot occur to a sensible person to place a modern on an equal footing with Homer in the areas in which he is great and it sounds ridiculous enough when one sees a Milton or a Klopstock (19) honoured with the name of a modern Homer. Just as little, however, can any ancient poet and Homer least of all survive comparison with a modern poet in that area in which he characteristically excels. The ancient, if I may so express it, is powerful through the art of limitation; the modern through the art of the infinite.

And the fact that the strength of the ancient artist (for what has been said here of the poet can, with obvious modifications, be extended to any artist) consists in limitation, explains the high esteem which the visual art of ancient times enjoys over that of modern times and the entire unequal relationship with regard to value in which modern poetry and the modern visual arts stand to both artistic genres in ancient times. A work for the eye finds its perfection only in limitation. A work for the imagination can attain it also by means of the infinite. In works of sculpture, therefore, the modern is little aided by his superiority in ideas; he is forced here to *determine* the picture of his imagination in the most exact way *in space* and as a result to compete with the ancient artist in just that characteristic in which the latter has an unquestioned advantage. It is different with literary works; and even if the ancient poets triumph here too in the simplicity of forms and in what can be depicted by means of the senses and is *corporeal*, the modern can

on the other hand leave the ancients behind in the richness of his material, in what cannot be depicted and expressed, in short, in that which in works of art one calls the spiritual.

Since the naive poet only follows simple nature and simple emotions and restricts himself solely to the imitation of nature, so he can only have a single relationship with his subject-matter and in *this* regard he has no choice in his treatment of the material. The varied impression of naive literary works rests (assuming that one forgets what belongs to the content and considers that impression only as the sole achievement of the poetic treatment), it rests, I say, merely on the differing *degrees* of one and the same type of feeling; even the diversity of outward forms can make no difference to the quality of that aesthetic impression. Whether the form is lyric or epic, dramatic or descriptive we can be moved more or less strongly, but (as soon as one moves away from the content) never in a different way. Our feeling throughout is the same, consisting completely of *one* element so that we are not able to distinguish aspects of it. Even the difference of language and epoch does not change anything here, for just this pure unity of origin and effect is a characteristic of naive poetry.

Things are quite different with the sentimental poet. He *reflects* on the impression which objects make on him, and the emotion into which he himself is transposed and into which he transposes us is based only on that reflection. The object is related here to an idea and his poetic strength rests only on this relationship. The sentimental poet therefore is constantly dealing with two opposing concepts and emotions, with reality as boundary and with his idea as the infinite, and the mixed feeling which he excites will always bear witness to this double source (20). Since therefore we have several principles here, it depends which of the two *will preponderate* in the emotions of the poet and in his depiction, and consequently a difference in treatment is possible. For now the question arises whether he should linger more with reality or more with the ideal—whether he wants to depict the former as an object from which he turns away or the latter as an object which he turns towards. His depiction will, therefore, either be *satirical* or (in a wider meaning of this word which will be explained later) it will be *elegiac*; every sentimental poet will adhere to one of these two ways of feeling.

A poet is satirical when he takes as his subject the distance from nature and the contradiction between reality and the ideal (in their effect on the spirit both come to the same thing). However, he can accomplish this seriously and with emotion as well as jokingly and with merriment, according to whether he lingers in the area of the will or in the area of the understanding. The former occurs by means of *castigating* or pathetic satire, the latter by means of *jocose* satire.

Strictly speaking, the purpose of the poet is compatible neither with a castigating nor with a jocose tone. The former is too serious for the game which poetry should always be; the latter is too frivolous for the earnestness which should lie at the back of all poetic playfulness. Moral contradictions necessarily interest our heart and therefore deprive the spirit of its freedom; and yet all real self-interest, i.e. all relation to a need, should be banished from poetic emotions. Contradictions of reason, on the other hand, leave the heart untouched and yet the poet is dealing with the supreme concern of the heart, with nature and the ideal. Therefore it is no mean task for him not to injure the poetic form, which consists in the freedom of play, in pathetic satire and in jocose satire not to miss the poetic content which must always be the infinite. This task can only be fulfilled in one way. Castigating satire achieves poetic freedom by passing over into the sublime; laughing satire attains poetic content by treating its subject with beauty.

In satire, reality as a deficiency is contrasted with the ideal as the highest reality. Moreover, it is not at all necessary that the latter should be expressed, if only the poet can call it into being in the spirit; he absolutely must do this, however, or he will not achieve a poetic effect at all. Reality here is therefore a necessary object of this turning away; but, and everything depends on this, this turning away itself must of necessity again spring from the contrasting ideal. For it could have a merely sensual source and be based purely on a need which is in conflict with reality; and often enough do we believe we are feeling a moral distaste for the world, when we are merely embittered by the conflict between it and our desire. It is this material self-interest which the common satirist brings into play and, because

he does not fail in this way to rouse our emotions, he thinks he has our hearts in his power and that he is a master of the pathetic. But all pathos from this source is unworthy of poetry, which moves us only by means of ideas and may only make its way to our hearts by means of reason. This impure and materialistic pathos will also always reveal itself through a preponderance of suffering and through an embarrassing constraint of the spirit, while on the contrary the truly poetic pathos is to be recognised by a preponderance of spontaneity and by a freedom of spirit which still exists in the midst of emotion. If the emotion springs from the ideal which is in contrast to reality, then in the sublimity of the former all restrictive feelings are lost and the greatness of the idea with which we are filled raises us above all the barriers of experience. In the depiction of shocking reality, therefore, everything depends on necessity being the basis onto which the poet or the narrator superimposes the real and on his being able to attune our spirit to ideas. If our judgment is only on a high level, then it does not matter if the subject remains lowly and far beneath us. When the historian *Tacitus* portrays for us the profound decadence of the Romans of the first century, then it is a sublime spirit which looks down on the lowly, and our mood is truly poetic because it is only the height on which he stands himself and to which he was able to raise us which made his subject matter lowly.

Pathetic satire therefore must always flow from a spirit which is vividly imbued with the ideal. Only a dominating drive for harmony is able and is allowed to produce that deep sense of moral contradictions and that burning distaste for moral perversion which in Juvenal, Swift, Rousseau (21), Haller (22) and others becomes a passion. The same poets would have and must have composed with the same success in touching and tender literary genres if accidental causes had not given their spirits early on this particular direction; in part they have really done so. All those named here either lived in a decadent age and had the horrifying experience of moral corruption before their eyes or their own destiny has implanted bitterness in their souls. The philosophical man too, since he distinguishes with implacable severity the illusion from the essence and penetrates into the depths of things, inclines his spirit to this hardness and austerity with which Rousseau, Haller and others depict reality.

But these outward and accidental influences which always have a limiting effect may at most only determine the direction, never provide the content of the inspiration. This must be the same in all cases and, free from every outward need, must flow out of a burning desire for the ideal which is the only true vocation for the satirical poet as for all sentimental poets.

If pathetic satire only adorns *sublime* souls, then mocking satire can only succeed for a beautiful heart. For the former is already safe from frivolity through its serious subject-matter; but the latter, which can only deal with morally unimportant material, would inevitably deteriorate and lose any poetic dignity if here the treatment did not ennoble the content and the *subjectivity* of the poet did not stand in for his subject-matter. But it is only given to a beautiful heart to impress a complete image of itself in each of its utterances independently of the subject-matter. The sublime character can only reveal itself in individual victories over the resistance of the senses, only in certain instances of ardour and momentary exertion; in the beautiful soul, on the other hand, the ideal functions as though it were nature, therefore uniformly, and can even manifest itself in a state of rest. The deep sea appears at its most sublime in its movement, the clear stream at its most beautiful in its even course.

It has often been debated which of the two, tragedy or comedy, should be placed above the other. If by this one is asking which of the two deals with the more important subject-matter, then there is no doubt that tragedy has the advantage; if, however, one wants to know which of the two demands the more important author, then one might decide in favour of comedy. In tragedy a lot already happens through the subject, in comedy nothing happens through the subject and everything through the author. Since in judgments of taste the material is never considered, then the aesthetic value of these two artistic genres must naturally stand in an inverse relationship to the importance of their material. The tragic writer is carried by his subject, the comic writer on the other hand must keep his on an aesthetic height by means of his own subjectivity. The former may soar into flight, which is really not so demanding; the latter must stay the same, *he* must therefore already *be* in, and be at home in, the place at which the other can only arrive by taking a run at it.

And that is just what makes the difference between the beautiful character and the sublime. In the first all greatness is already contained, it flows unforced and painlessly from his nature, in point of ability he is infinite at every stage of his career; the other can nerve and raise himself to any greatness, by the power of his will he can tear himself out of any limited state. The latter is therefore free only with difficulty and in fits and starts, the former is free with ease and at all times.

To produce and to nourish in us this freedom of spirit is the noble task of comedy, just as tragedy is ordained to help restore freedom of spirit in an aesthetic way, when it has been violently suspended by emotion. In tragedy therefore spiritual freedom must be suspended artificially and as an experiment because tragedy proves her poetic power by restoring it; comedy on the other hand must avoid ever going so far as to suspend freedom of the spirit. For this reason the tragic writer always treats his subject-matter in a practical way, the writer of comedy treats his in a theoretical way, even if the former (like Lessing in his *Nathan* (23)) has had the whim to treat a theoretical subject or the latter a practical one. It is not the area from which the subject is taken but the forum before which the writer presents it which makes it tragic or comic. The tragic writer must beware of calm reasoning and always interest the heart; the comic writer must avoid pathos and always entertain the understanding. The former therefore exhibits his artistry by means of the constant excitement, the latter by means of the constant avoidance of passion; and this artistry is naturally all the greater on each side according as the subject of the one is abstract in nature and that of the other tends towards the pathetic (24). If therefore tragedy has a more important point of departure, one must admit on the other side that comedy moves towards a more important goal and if it were reached, it would make all tragedy superfluous and impossible. Its goal is at one with the very highest for which man has to struggle, to be free of passion, to look always clearly, always calmly around him and into himself, to find everywhere more chance than fate and to laugh more over absurdity than to rage or to weep over malice.

As in the life of action, so too in poetic representations it often happens that mere frivolity, pleasant talent, cheerful good-nature is

confused with beauty of soul and since the common taste never raises itself above the pleasant, so it is easy for such *charming* talents to usurp that fame which is so difficult to earn. But there is an unfailing test by means of which one can distinguish lightness of disposition from lightness of ideals, just as one can distinguish virtue of temperament from true probity of character, and this test is when both attempt a difficult and great subject. In such a case the charming genius falls unfailingly flat just as the virtue of temperament falls into materialism; the truly beautiful soul on the other hand rises just as certainly into the sublime.

As long as Lucian (25) merely castigates absurdity as in the *Wishes*, in the *Lapiths*, in *Jupiter Tragoedus*, etc., he remains a mocker and amuses with his cheerful humour; but he becomes quite a different man in many passages of his *Nigrinus*, his *Timon*, his *Alexander*, where his satire also hits moral corruption. 'Unhappy man', is how he begins the shocking picture of Rome at that time in his *Nigrinus*, 'why did you leave the light of the sun, Greece, and that happy life of freedom and come here to the bustle of magnificent servility, of receptions and banquets, of sycophants, flatterers, poisoners, legacy-hunters and false friends? etc.'. On such and similar occasions the noble seriousness of feeling which must form the basis for all play, if it is to be poetic, must reveal itself. Even through the malicious humour with which Lucian as well as Aristophanes maltreat Socrates, there shines a serious intellect which revenges truth on the sophist and fights for an ideal which it only does not always express. The first of these two has also justified this character beyond all doubt in his *Diogenes* and *Demonax*; among the moderns, what a great and noble character does *Cervantes* not express at every worthy opportunity in his *Don Quixote*! What a magnificent ideal must have existed in the soul of the writer who created a *Tom Jones* and a *Sophia* (26); how can *Yorick* (27) the laughter stir our spirit at will so much and so mightily. In our *Wieland* (28) too I recognise this seriousness of feeling; the grace of his heart inspires and ennobles even the capricious play of his moods, even onto the rhythm of his song does it impress its character, and he never lacks the impetus to carry us, when it is necessary, up to the highest point.

No such judgment can be made with regard to Voltaire's satire.

Though with this writer too it is solely through the truth and simplicity of nature that he touches us poetically at times, whether he really achieves them in a naive character as several times in his *Ingenu*, or looks for and avenges them as in his *Candide* (29) etc. Yet where neither of the two is the case, then he can indeed amuse us as a witty fellow but certainly not move us as a poet. But his mockery everywhere has too little basis in seriousness and this rightly calls in question his poetic vocation. We always only meet his intellect, not his feelings. No ideal reveals itself under that airy covering and scarcely anything absolutely firm in that eternal movement. His wonderful multiplicity in outward forms, far from proving the inner richness of his spirit, rather on the contrary bears doubtful witness against it; for in spite of all those forms he has not found even one on which he could impress his heart. One must therefore almost fear that in this rich genius it was only the poverty of his heart which determined that his calling should be satire. If this were not so, then at some point on his long path he would have had to step off this narrow track. But be the change of material and outward form never so great, we see this inner form return to an eternal threadbare sameness, and in spite of his voluminous career he has not fulfilled in himself the compass of humanity which one finds joyously explored by the above-mentioned satirists.

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If the poet contrasts the nature of art and the ideal of reality in such a way that the representation of the former preponderates and pleasure in it becomes the dominant emotion, then I call it *elegiac*. This genre too, like satire, has two sub-divisions. Either nature and the ideal are an object of sadness if the former is represented as lost and the latter as unattained. Or both are an object of joy by being presented as actual. The first gives us the *elegy* in the narrower sense, the second the *idyll* in the widest sense (30).

As with indignation in pathetic satire and mockery in jocose satire, so in the elegy sadness may only flow from inspiration called into being by the ideal. Through this alone does the elegy receive a poetic value and any other source for it is completely beneath the dignity of literature. The elegiac poet seeks for nature, but in her

beauty not merely in her pleasantness, in her harmony with ideas not merely in her pliability to a need. The sadness over lost joys, over the Golden Age fled from the world, over the vanished happiness of youth, of love etc. can only then become the material for an elegiac poem when those states of sensual peace can be presented at the same time as objects of moral harmony. For this reason I cannot easily regard the mournful songs of *Ovid* which he sings from his place of exile on the Black Sea on the whole as a poetic work, no matter how touching they are and how much of the poetic there is in individual passages. There is much too little energy, much too little spirit and nobility in his pain. Need, not inspiration, forced out those laments; in them there breathes if not a common soul, then the common mood of a more noble spirit bowed down by his fate. Though indeed when we recollect that it is Rome and the Rome of Augustus for which he mourns, then we forgive the son of joy his pain; but even magnificent Rome with all its felicities is merely a finite greatness if the imagination does not first ennoble it, is hence an unworthy subject for poetry, which, elevated over all which reality creates, only has the right to mourn for the infinite.

The content of a poetic lament can consequently never be an outward but always only an inner ideal object; even when it mourns a real loss, it must first reform it into an ideal one. This reduction of the limited to the infinite constitutes in fact poetic treatment. The outward material is therefore in itself always indifferent, because literature can never use it in that form in which she finds it but gives it poetic dignity only through what she herself makes out of it. The elegiac poet is in search of nature but as an idea and in a perfection in which it never existed, although he mourns it as though it were something which had once existed and was now lost. When Ossian (31) tells us of the days which are no more and of the heroes who are gone, then his poetic power has long ago transformed those images of the recollection into ideals, those heroes into gods. The experience of a particular loss has been extended to the idea of a general transience, and the bard, moved and pursued by the picture of omnipresent ruin, flies up to the heavens in order to find there in the course of the sun an image of the infinite (32).

Let me turn immediately to the modern poets of the elegiac type. *Rousseau*, as a poet and as a philosopher, has no other purpose than

either to look for nature or to avenge it on art. According to whether his emotions linger with the one or with the other, we find him now moved to elegy, now spurred on to Juvenilian satire, now, as in his *Julie* (33), transported into the field of the *idyll*. His works have an incontrovertibly poetic value since they deal with an ideal; it is only that he does not know how to use it in a poetic way. His serious character never allows him indeed to sink to frivolity but neither does it allow him to rise to the play of poetry. Now strained by passion, now by abstraction, he seldom achieves the aesthetic freedom which the poet must maintain towards his material and which he must communicate to his reader. Either it is his diseased sensitivity which dominates over him and drives his emotions until they become distressing; or it is his power of thought which fetters his imagination and through the strictness of its concepts annihilates the grace of the portrayal. Both characteristics, whose close mutual effect and union actually make the poet, are to be found in this writer to an unusually high degree and nothing is lacking but that they should really express themselves in union with one another, that his spontaneity should combine more with his emotions, that his receptivity should combine more with his thought. Therefore in the ideal of humanity which he proposes, there is too much regard for the boundaries of it and too little for its capability, and everywhere is visible more of a need for physical *peace* than for moral *harmony*. It is the fault of his passionate sensitivity that, in order to get rid of the conflict in humanity as soon as possible, he prefers to lead it back to the mindless monotony of its first state rather than to see that conflict ended in the intelligent harmony of an education which has been carried through, that he prefers not to let art begin at all rather than to await its perfection, in short that he prefers to set his goal lower and reduce his ideal in order to reach it all the more quickly and all the more safely.

Among German poets of this type I only want to mention here *Haller*, *Kleist* (34) and *Klopstock*. The character of their writing is sentimental; they move us by means of ideas, not through sensual truth, not only because they themselves are natural but because they know how to inspire us with enthusiasm for nature. What is meanwhile true of the character of these as well as of all sentimental writers *as a whole* in no way of course rules out the capacity to

move us *in individual instances* by means of naive beauty; without that they would nowhere be poets. It is only that it is not their real and dominant character to receive with a calm, simple and easy mind and to reproduce again what they have received in the same way. Involuntarily fantasy pushes out perception and force of thought emotion, and eye and ear is closed in order that they may sink into themselves to meditate. The spirit can suffer no impression without at the same time observing its own operation and what it consists of, without placing it opposite and outside itself by means of reflection. In this way we never receive the object, only what the reflecting intelligence of the poet has made of the object and even then, if the poet himself is this object, if he wants to portray his emotions for us, we do not experience his state directly and at first hand but as it is reflected in his spirit, what he as the observer of himself has thought about it. When Haller mourns the death of his wife (you know the lovely poem) and begins in this way:

Shall I sing of your death,

O Mariane, what a song!

When sighs struggle with the words

And one idea flees from another . . . (35)

then we find this description exactly true; but we also feel that the poet is not communicating his feelings to us but his thoughts about them. He therefore touches us also far less strongly because he himself must already have cooled down considerably in order to be the onlooker at his own emotion.

The largely spiritual material of Haller's works and partly too of Klopstock's excludes them already from the naive genre; as soon therefore as that material was to be in any way treated poetically, it had, since it could not take on a corporeal nature and as a result could not become an object of perception by the senses, to be transposed into the infinite and elevated to an object of spiritual perception. It is only in this sense at all possible to imagine a didactic poetry without inner contradiction; for, to repeat it once again, the art of literature only possesses these two fields, either it must dwell in the world of the senses or it must dwell in the world of ideas, since it can only flourish with difficulty in the realm of definitions or in the world of the understanding. I must admit that I do not as

yet know any poem in this genre, either from ancient or modern literature, which has brought the concept with which it is dealing in a pure and complete way either down to individuality or up to the idea. The usual case is, if all goes well, that there is an alternation between the two, while the abstract concept is dominant and the imagination, which should be in command in the poetic field, is only allowed to serve the understanding. We are still waiting for that didactic poem in which the thought itself would be poetic and would remain so.

What has here been said in general of all didactic poetry is especially true of Haller's. The thought itself is not a poetic one but the treatment makes it so at times, sometimes by the use of images, sometimes by the impetus towards ideas. They only belong here because of the latter quality. Power and profundity and a pathetic seriousness characterise this poet. His soul is aflame with an ideal and his burning feeling for the truth searches in the still Alpine valleys for the innocence which has vanished from the world. His lament is deeply moving; with energetic, almost bitter satire he paints the aberrations of the understanding and the heart and with love the beautiful simplicity of nature. It is only that the concept preponderates too much in his portrayals, just as in himself the understanding plays the master over the emotions. For this reason he *teaches* constantly more than he *depicts*, and depicts constantly with strong rather than with charming details. He is great, daring, fiery, elevated; he has, however, seldom or never risen to beauty.

In the intrinsic merit of his ideas and in the profundity of his spirit *Kleist* is much inferior to this poet; he might surpass him in grace if we do not do other than, as happens sometimes, credit a weakness on one side as a strength on the other. Kleist's emotional soul likes to revel most in the contemplation of rural scenes and customs. He likes to flee from the empty noise of society and in the bosom of lifeless nature he finds the harmony and peace which he misses in the moral world. How touching is his longing for peace (36)! How true and how sincere when he sings:

O world, you are the grave of true life!
A burning desire often attracts me to virtue,
A stream rolls down my cheek for sadness,
The example wins and you, oh fire of youth,

You soon dry the noble tears.

A true man must be far from men.

But when his poetic urge has led him out of the narrow compass of his circumstances into the thoughtful solitude of nature, he is pursued even here by the terrifying picture of his times and unfortunately also by his fetters. What he is fleeing is in him, what he is seeking is eternally outside of him; he can never overcome the evil influence of his century. If his heart is just fiery, his imagination just energetic enough to breathe life into the dead creations of the understanding by his depiction of them, then the cold thought again just as often drains the life from the living creation of the poetic power and reflection disturbs the secret work of the emotions. His poetry is indeed colourful and blooming like the spring which he has hymned, his imagination is lively and active; yet one would rather call them changeable than rich, playful than creative, restlessly progressing than collecting and forming. Detail after detail changes quickly and abundantly but without becoming concentrated enough to form an individual, without filling itself out enough to come to life or rounding itself enough to form a figure. As long as he merely writes lyric poetry and lingers among depictions of landscape, partly the greater freedom of the lyric form, partly the more capricious nature of his material allows us to overlook this lack, because here we want to have the feelings of the poet rather than the subject itself depicted. But the fault becomes only too noticeable when he makes so bold, as in his *Cissides and Paches* and in his *Seneca* (37), to portray men and human actions, because here the imagination sees itself shut in between firm and necessary boundaries and the poetic effect can only proceed from the *subject-matter*. Here he becomes paltry, boring, thin and so frosty as to be unbearable; a warning example for all who without an inner vocation ascend from the field of musical poetry to the area of educative poetry. The same human weakness also befell a related genius, *Thomson* (38).

In the sentimental genre and especially in the elegiac section of it there are few from the modern poets and still fewer from the ancients to compare with *Klopstock*. Whatever is to be achieved outside the boundaries of living form and outside the area of individuality in the field of the ideal has been achieved by this musical poet (39). One would do him a great wrong if one were to deny him completely

that individual truth and liveliness with which the naive poet depicts his subject. Many of his odes, several individual details in his plays and in his 'Messiah' represent the subject with striking truth and excellent definition; especially where the subject is his own heart, he has often shown a great naturalness, a charming naiveté. It is just that *his* strength does not lie in this, this characteristic cannot be followed throughout the entire extent of his poetry. As wonderful a creation as the Messiah is in a *musical* and poetic way, according to the above-mentioned definition, it yet leaves much to be desired in a *three-dimensional* and poetic sense, where one expects *definite forms created for contemplation*. The figures in this poem may be definite enough perhaps but not to be contemplated; only abstraction has created them, only abstraction can distinguish them one from another. They are good examples of concepts but they are not individuals or living figures. Much too much freedom has been given to the imagination, to which the poet must turn and which he should dominate by the consistent definition of his forms, as to the way in which it wants to render perceptible to the senses these men and angels, these gods and devils, this heaven and hell. An outline has been given within which the understanding must of necessity think of them, but no firm boundary has been laid down within which the imagination must of necessity portray them. What I am saying here of the characters is true of everything in this poem which is or is meant to be life and action, and not merely in this epic but also in the dramatic works of our author. Everything has been excellently ordered and defined for the understanding (I want here only to remind you of his Judas, his Pilate, his Philo, his Solomon in the tragedy of that name) but it is much too formless for the imagination and here, I admit it freely, I find this poet completely outside of his sphere.

His sphere is always the realm of ideas and he knows how to transpose everything which he is working on into the infinite. One might say that he strips everything which he treats of its body in order to make it into a spirit, just as other poets dress everything spiritual with a body. Almost every pleasure which his works afford us must be won by an exercise of the power of thought; all the emotions which he is able to excite in us, and so deeply and so powerfully too, flow from supra-sensual sources. From this stem

the seriousness, the power, the verve, the profundity which characterise everything which comes from him; from this comes, too, the continuous tension of the emotions in which we are held when reading it. No poet (with the possible exception of Young (40) who demands more than Klopstock but without repaying it as Klopstock does) would be less suited to be a favourite and companion through life than Klopstock, who always only leads us away from life, always only calls the spirit to arms without enlivening the senses with the calm presence of his subject. His poetic muse is chaste, supernatural, uncorporeal, holy as his religion and one must admit with admiration that, although he has at times gone astray on these heights, he has never sunk from them; I admit therefore openly that I am a little uneasy about the wits of one who truly and without affectation can make this poet into his favourite reading, that is, can use him as a book to which one can attune oneself in every situation, to which one can return from every situation; also, I should think, we have seen enough fruits in Germany of his dangerous rule. Only in certain exalted moods of the spirit can he be sought out and experienced; for this reason too he is the idol of youth, although not the happiest choice for them by far. Youth, which always strives to go beyond life, which flees all form and finds any boundary too narrow, indulges itself with love and desire in the endless spaces which are opened for it by this poet. When the youth becomes a man and returns from the realm of ideas into the boundaries of experience, then he loses a deal, a great deal of that enthusiastic love, but nothing of the respect which is due to such a unique phenomenon, such an extraordinary genius, such an ennobled feeling, and which Germans especially owe to such high merit.

I called this poet great pre-eminently in the elegiac genre and it will scarcely be necessary to justify this judgment more particularly. Capable of every energy and a master in the whole field of sentimental poetry, he can at times shatter us by means of the highest pathos, at times cradle us in heavenly sweet sensations; but his heart does incline above all to a high, thoughtful sadness; and no matter how nobly his harp, his lyre sound, the melting tones of his lute will yet always ring deeper and truer and more stirring. I appeal to each feeling which rings true whether it would not give all that is daring and strong, all the fictions, all the magnificent descriptions, all

the examples of rhetorical eloquence in the 'Messiah', all the shimmering metaphors in which our poet is so exceptionally successful, for the tender emotions which breathe from the elegy 'To Ebert', from the wonderful poem 'Bardale', from 'Early Graves', from 'Summer Night', from 'Lake Zurich' and many others of this genre. Thus the Messiah is dear to me as a treasure-house of elegiac feelings and ideal depictions, however little it satisfies me as the representation of an action and as an epic work.

Perhaps, before I leave this area, I should remind you again of the achievements of an *Uz* (41), a *Denis* (42), a *Gessner* (in his 'Death of Abel') (43), a *Jacobi* (44), a *von Gerstenberg*, a *Hölty*, and a *von Göckingk* (45) and many others of this type which touch us all by their ideas and in the meaning of the word laid down above have composed sentimental poetry. But my purpose is not to write a history of German literature but to clarify what I have said above by means of a few examples from our literature. I wanted to show the diversity of the paths on which ancient and modern, naive and sentimental poets walk towards the same goal—that if the former touch us through nature, individuality and lively *sensuality*, the latter exhibit an equally great if not such a widespread power over our spirit by means of ideas and noble *spirituality*.

From the foregoing examples we have seen how the sentimental poetic spirit deals with a natural subject; one might, however, also be interested to know how the naive poetic spirit fares with a sentimental subject. This task seems to be completely new and of a quite singular difficulty, since in the ancient and naive world such a *subject* is not to be found, and in the new the *poet* for it is lacking. Nonetheless genius (46) has made this task its own and has solved it in an admirably happy way. A character which embraces an ideal with a burning emotion and flees reality in order to struggle for an infinite which has no substance, who ceaselessly seeks outside himself what he ceaselessly destroys within himself, to whom only his dreams have reality, to whom his experience is eternally only a barrier, who finally sees only a barrier in his own existence and tears this down too as is right, in order to penetrate to the true reality—this dangerous extreme of the sentimental character has become the material of a poet in whom nature functions more faithfully and more purely than in any other and who, among

modern poets, distances himself perhaps the least from the sensual truth of things.

It is interesting to see with what a happy instinct everything which gives nourishment to the sentimental character is concentrated in '*Werther*'; emotional, unhappy love, sensitivity towards nature, feelings of religion, the spirit of philosophical contemplation, finally, in order to omit nothing, the dark, formless melancholy Ossianic world. If one adds to this the way in which reality is placed against this as so little to be recommended, indeed as so inimical, and how everything is united from outside to force the tortured hero back into his ideal world, then one sees no possibility by which such a character could have been saved from such an ambience. In '*Tasso*' by the same author the same contrast returns, although in different characters; even in his new *novel* the poeticising spirit stands opposed as in the first novel to sober common sense, the ideal to the real, the subjective method of imagination to the objective—but with what a difference!; even in '*Faust*' we encounter the same contrast, indeed as the material demanded much coarsened and made much more materialistic; it would probably well repay the trouble to attempt a psychological development of this character exemplified in four such different ways.

It has been remarked above that the merely trivial and jovial type of spirit, if it has no inner richness of ideas as a basis, will not lead to a vocation for jocose satire, however generously it is taken to have it by the common verdict; just as little does merely tender softness and melancholy give a vocation for elegiac poetry. The energetic principle is lacking in both to make them true poetic talents, the principle which must breathe life into the material in order to produce the truly beautiful. Products of this tender type can therefore merely melt us and, without refreshing the heart and occupying the spirit, merely flatter the senses. A continuous tendency towards this kind of emotion must finally weaken the character and plunge it into a state of passivity from which no reality at all, either for the outer or the inner life, can emerge. Quite rightly, therefore, that evil of lachrymose *over-sentimentality* (47) which, through the misinterpretation and aping of some excellent works, began to spread in Germany about 18 years ago, has been pursued with implacable mockery, although the

tolerance which people have tended to show towards the opposite of elegiac caricature which is not much better, towards the jocose type, towards heartless satire and mindless humour (48), make plain enough that they have protested against it on not quite pure grounds. On the scales of true good taste the one can be held good as little as the other, because both are lacking in aesthetic value, which is only contained in the close combination of the spirit with the subject-matter in the combined relationship of a work to the capacity to feel and to think.

Siegwart (49) and his story of the monastery have been laughed at and the '*Journeys to Southern France*' (50) are admired; yet the two works have an equally big claim to a certain degree of esteem and an equally small one to unconditional praise. True feeling, although overdone, makes the first novel estimable, a light humour and an enlightened, sensitive understanding the second; but just as the first is completely lacking in the needful sobriety of the understanding, so the other is lacking in aesthetic dignity. The first when compared with experience becomes a little ridiculous, the second compared with the ideal becomes almost despicable. Since the truly beautiful must be in harmony on the one side with nature and on the other with the ideal, the one can lay claim as little as the other to the title of a beautiful work. Yet it is natural and fitting, and I know it from my own experience, that Thümmel's novel should be read with great pleasure. Since it only offends those demands which spring from the ideal, which consequently are not made by the greater part of its readers and not by the better part in those moments in which one reads novels, and since it fulfils the other demands of the spirit and of the body in no small measure, so it must, and will with justice, remain a favourite book of our period and of all those periods in which one writes aesthetic works solely in order to please and reads merely in order to give oneself pleasure.

But has not poetic literature even classical works to show which offend the noble purity of the ideal in a similar way and seem to distance themselves greatly through the materialism of their content from that spirituality which is here being demanded of every aesthetic work of art? What even the poet, the chaste disciple of the muse, may allow himself, should that be forbidden

to the novelist, who is only his half-brother and still clings so much to the earth? I am able even less to avoid this question because in the elegiac as in the satirical field there are masterpieces which have the reputation of seeking, of recommending and of defending from bad as well as from good habits a quite different sort of nature from that of which this essay speaks. Therefore, either those literary works are to be condemned or the concept of elegiac poetry proposed here must be far too arbitrary.

What the poet may allow himself, we said, should not be condoned in the prose narrator? The answer is already contained in the question; what is allowed to the poet can prove nothing in the case of him who is not one. In the concept of the poet himself and only in this there lies the reason for that freedom which is merely despicable licence as soon as it cannot be derived from the highest and most noble qualities of which he consists.

The laws of decency are foreign to innocent nature; only the experience of corruption has given rise to them. As soon, however, as that experience has once been made and the natural innocence has vanished from manners, then they are holy laws which a virtuous feeling may not offend against. They are valid in an artificial world with the same right as that with which the laws of nature rule in the world of innocence. But it is just this which constitutes the poet, that he in himself suspends everything which reminds us of an artificial world, that he knows how to restore nature again to her original simplicity. If he has done this, however, then by doing so he is freed from all laws by means of which a heart which has been led astray protects itself from itself. He is pure, he is innocent, and what is allowed to innocent nature is allowed to him also; if you who read or hear him are no longer guiltless and if you cannot even become so momentarily through his purifying presence, then that is *your* misfortune and not his; you abandon him, he has not sung for you.

With regard to such freedoms one can therefore conclude the following:

Firstly: only *nature* can justify them. Consequently they may not become the creation of choice and of an intentional imitation; for we could never forgive the will, which is always directed towards moral laws, if it favoured sensuality. They therefore have to be *naïve*. In order to be able to convince ourselves that they really are

natural we have to see that they are supported and accompanied by everything else which is also founded in nature because nature can only be recognised by the strict consistency, unity and uniformity of her workings. We permit only a heart which abhors all affectation, and hence abhors it also where it would be useful, to free itself from it where it oppresses and limits; we permit only a heart which submits to all the fetters of nature to make use of its freedoms. All the other sensations of such a man must in consequence bear the stamp of naturalness on them; he must be true, simple, free, open, full of feeling, straightforward; all pretence, all cunning, all whim, all petty egotism must be banished from his character, all traces of it from his works.

Secondly: only *beautiful* nature can justify such freedoms. Hence they may not be a onesided explosion of desire; for everything which springs from mere need is despicable. These sensual energies must emerge from the entirety and the richness of human nature. They must be *liberal and high-minded*. In order, however, to be able to judge that the whole of human nature and not merely a onesided and lowly sensual need demands them, we must see the whole, of which they form a single strand, depicted. In itself the type of feeling which comes from the senses is something innocent and neutral. It displeases in a man only because it is animal and bears witness to a lack of true humanity in him; it offends us only in a literary work for the reason that such a work lays claim to please us and hence holds *us* also capable of such a lack. If we see, in the man who lets himself be surprised in this, humanity at work in all the rest of her scope, if we find in the work in which freedoms of this kind are taken all the realities of humanity expressed, then that ground for our mistrust is swept away and we can enjoy with undisturbed pleasure the naive expression of true and beautiful nature. The same poet, therefore, who can allow himself to make us sharers in such lowly human feelings must on the other hand know how to bear us aloft to all that is great and beautiful and elevated in humanity.

And with that we have found the criterion to which we can with safety make any poet submit who ventures against decency and who pushes his freedom in the representation of nature to this limit. His work is mean, low, despicable without exception as soon as it

is *cold* and as soon as it is *empty* because this proves an origin in design and in a low need and a heinous attack on our desires. On the other hand it is beautiful, noble and, without regard for all the objections of a frosty decency, worthy of applause as soon as it is naive and combines mind with heart (51).

If you say to me that according to the criterion given here most French narrative works of this type and their happiest imitations in Germany would not come off very well—that this would also partly be the case with many of the products of our most graceful and witty author (52), his masterpieces not even excepted, then I have no answer to give. The verdict itself is anything but new and I am giving here only the reasons for a judgment which has been passed long ago on these subjects by every finer feeling. However, just these principles which perhaps seem all too rigorous with regard to those writings may with regard to some other works perhaps seem too liberal; for I do not deny that the same reasons for which I do not consider the seductive portrayals of the *Roman* and the *German Ovid* (53), as well as those of *Crébillon* (54), *Voltaire*, *Marmontel* (55) (who calls himself a moral author), *Laclos* (56) and many others as capable of being excused, can reconcile me to the elegies of the *Roman* and the *German Propertius* (57), even to many a decried work by *Diderot* (58); for the former are only witty, only prosaic, only lascivious; the latter are poetic, human and naive (59).

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The idyll

It still remains for me to say a few words about this third type of sentimental work; only a few, for I want to reserve a more detailed discussion of it, which it badly needs, to another occasion (60).

The poetic representation of innocent and happy humanity is the general intention of this kind of writing. Because this innocence and this happiness seem incompatible with the artificial circumstances of society as a whole and with a certain degree of education and refinement, the poets have removed the scene of the idyll from the bustle of bourgeois life to the simple pastoral state and have assigned it a place *before the beginning of culture* in the childlike

age of man. One can easily grasp, however, that these stipulations are merely coincidental, that they are not the purpose of the idyll but are solely to be considered as the most natural means towards it. The purpose itself is always only to represent man in a state of innocence, i.e. in a state of harmony and peace with himself and from outside.

But such a state is not just to be found before the beginning of culture but is also what culture, if it is only to have one definite trend, intends as its ultimate goal. The very idea of this state and the belief in its possible reality can reconcile man to all the evils to which he is subjected on the path of culture and if they were only chimeras, then the complaints of those who only condemn society as a whole and the development of reason as an ill, and who present that lost state of nature as the true goal of man, would be perfectly justified. The man who is involved in the cultural process is therefore extremely concerned to receive support via the senses for the possibility of carrying out that idea in the world of the senses, of the possible reality of that state, and since real experience, far from nourishing this belief, rather constantly disproves it, so here as in so many other cases the poetic talent comes to the aid of reason in order to make that idea perceptible and, in an individual case, actual.

Of course that pastoral innocence is a poetic concept too and the imagination has already therefore had to prove its creative power there also; but apart from the fact that the task was much more simply and easily solved there, individual details were themselves already to be found in the experience which the imagination only needed to choose from and to combine into a whole. Nature is easily satisfied under a happy sky, in the simple circumstances of early man, with a limited store of knowledge, and man does not become depraved until that lack frightens him. All peoples who have a history have a paradise, a state of innocence, a golden age; yes, every individual man has his paradise, his golden age which he remembers with more or less enthusiasm according to whether he has more or less that is poetic in his nature. The experience itself therefore contributes enough details to the portrayal with which the pastoral idyll deals. For that reason however, it always remains a beautiful, an elevating fiction and the poetic power has truly

contributed to the ideal in representing it. For it is of unceasing importance for the man who has once fallen away from the simplicity of nature and has been handed over to the dangerous guidance of his reason to see again a pure example of the laws of nature and to be able to purify himself from the corruptions of art in this faithful mirror. But there is one circumstance which seriously diminishes the aesthetic value of such works. Set *before the beginning of culture* they exclude, together with the disadvantages of culture, at the same time all the advantages and from their very being find themselves necessarily in conflict with it. *Theoretically* therefore they lead us back while *in practice* they are leading us forward and ennobling us. Unfortunately, they place *behind* us the goal *towards* which they should be *leading* us and thus can only inspire in us the sad feeling of loss, not the cheerful feeling of hope. Because they can fulfil their purpose only by the suspension of all art and only by the simplification of human nature, so, although they have the highest value for the *heart*, they have all too little for the *mind* and their monotonous sphere is soon exhausted. Thus we can only love them and seek them out when we have need of peace, not when our powers strive for action and movement. They can only bring *balm* to the sick spirit, not *nourishment* to the healthy one; they cannot enliven, only pacify. All the art of the poets has not been able to make good this fault based in the nature of the pastoral idyll. Of course this genre too is not lacking in enthusiastic supporters and there are enough readers who can prefer an 'Amyntas' and a 'Daphnis' (61) to the greatest masterpieces of the epic and dramatic muse; but with such readers it is not only taste but the individual need which judges works of art and their verdict can consequently not be considered here. The reader of intelligence and feeling does not of course ignore the value of such works but he feels himself drawn to them less often and sated by them sooner. In the right moment of need they have an effect which is all the more powerful; but what is truly beautiful never needs to wait for such a moment but rather creates it.

What I am finding fault with here in the pastoral idyll applies only to the sentimental type; for the naive type can never be lacking in value since here it is already contained *in the form itself*. For all poetry must have an infinite value, this alone is what makes

it poetry; but it can fulfil this demand in two different ways. It can be infinite in form if it represents its subject *with all its limitations*, if it individualises it; it can be infinite in substance, if it *removes all limitations* from its subject, if it idealises it, therefore, either by means of an absolute representation or by means of the representation of an absolute. The naive poet takes the first path, the sentimental the second. The first therefore cannot fail to attain this goal if he only holds faithfully to nature which is always consistently limited, i.e. is infinite in form. Nature, however, with its complete limitations, stands in the way of the second for he must introduce an absolute value into his subject. The sentimental poet does not know what is to his advantage, therefore, when he borrows his *subjects* from the naive poet, subjects which are in themselves completely neutral and only become poetic by their treatment. In doing so he quite unnecessarily sets himself the same limitations as the former, yet without carrying out the limitation completely and without being able to compete with him in the absolute exactitude of his representation; thus he should rather distance himself in his subject-matter from the naive poet because it is only by means of the subject-matter that he can regain the advantage which the other has over him in form.

If we apply this to the pastoral idyll of the sentimental poets, we see why these works with all their display of genius and art are fully satisfying neither for the heart nor for the head. They have depicted an ideal and yet retained the narrow deficient pastoral world, when they should definitely have chosen another world for the ideal or another kind of depiction for the pastoral world. They are ideal just in so far as the depiction loses its individual truth by this means and again they are just individual enough for the ideal value to suffer under it. One of *Gessner's* shepherds, for example, cannot charm us as nature nor through the truthfulness of the imitation, since he is too much an ideal being for this; just as little can he satisfy us as an ideal by means of the infinity of the idea, since for this he is much too paltry a figure. Therefore he will please *all kinds of reader without exception up to a certain point* because he attempts to combine the naive with the sentimental and consequently fulfils to a certain degree the two opposing demands which can be made of a poem; but because the poet, in his attempt

to combine both, does not *do full justice* to either of them, is neither all nature nor all ideal, therefore he cannot stand the test of strict good taste which in aesthetic matters can forgive nothing half-baked. It is strange that this half-baked quality should extend too to the language of the afore-mentioned poet, a language which hovers indecisively between poetry and prose as though the writer were afraid in metrical speech to move too far away from real nature and in prose to lose his poetic flight. *Milton's* wonderful depiction of the first human pair and of the state of innocence in *Paradise* affords a higher satisfaction; this is the most beautiful idyll of the sentimental type that I know. Here nature is noble, intelligent, at once full of surface and full of depth; the highest value of humanity is clothed in the most graceful form.

Thus here too in the idyll, as in all other poetic genres, one must choose once and for all between the individual and the ideal; for to want to satisfy both demands at the same time is the surest way, as long as one has not reached the goal of perfection, to miss both together. If the modern feels himself Greek enough in spirit to compete with the Greeks in their own arena, namely in the field of naive poetry, regardless of the intractability of his material, then let him do it completely and exclusively and let him disregard every demand made by the sentimental taste of the period. Of course he will scarcely come up to his model; between the original and its most successful imitator there will always remain a noticeable distance; but in this way he is certain of producing a truly poetic work (62). If, on the other hand, the sentimental literary urge should impel him towards the ideal, then let him pursue this too in complete purity and let him not pause before he has reached the very highest point, without looking behind him to see whether reality is following after him. Let him despise the unworthy escape route which consists of demeaning the value of the ideal in order to fit in with human neediness and of excluding the intellect in order to have an easier time with the heart. Let him not lead us back into our childhood in order to have us purchase peace and quiet with the most precious attainments of the intellect, a peace and quiet which can last no longer than the slumber of our intellectual powers, but lead us on to adulthood in order to let us feel the higher harmony which rewards the fighter, which blesses the conqueror. Let him

take as his task the creation of an idyll which would put into effect that pastoral innocence also among culture's subjects and under all the conditions of the most sturdy, most vibrant life, of the most extended thought, of the most subtle art, of the highest social refinement, which in a word leads man who cannot go back to *Arcadia* as far as *Elysium* (63).

The concept of this idyll is the concept of a conflict completely resolved in the individual man and in society, of a free union of the inclinations with the law, of a nature purified to the highest moral dignity, in short, it is no other than the ideal of beauty applied to real life. Its character therefore consists of the fact that *all conflict between reality and the ideal* which provided the material for satiric and elegiac poetry is completely resolved and with that, all conflict of the emotions ceases. *Peace* would thus be the dominant impression of this kind of literature but the peace of consummation, not of laziness; a peace which flows from equilibrium, not from the cessation of the powers, which flows from richness, not from emptiness, and is accompanied by the feeling of an endless capacity. But for just the reason that all opposition falls away, it becomes infinitely more difficult than in the two previous kinds of poetry to produce that *movement* without which no poetic effect can ever be imagined. The highest unity must exist but it may not take away from diversity; the spirit must be satisfied but without the striving towards that satisfaction ceasing. It is in fact the solution of this problem which the theory of the idyll can achieve.

The following has been established on the relationship of the two kinds of poetry to each other and to the poetic ideal.

Nature has accorded the naive poet the favour of always functioning as an individual unit, of being at all times an independent and perfect whole and of depicting humanity in its full value in reality. To the sentimental poet nature has given the power, or rather has impressed on him a lively urge, to restore from within himself every unity which has been dissolved in him by abstraction, to make humanity in itself complete again and to pass from a limited state to an infinite one (64). To give human nature its full expression is, however, the task common to both and without that they would not be called poets at all; but the naive poet always has the advantage of the sentimental poet in the matter of sensual reality,

in which he executes as a real fact what the other only strives to attain. And that is what everyone experiences within himself when he observes himself during the enjoyment of naive works. In such a moment he feels all the powers of his humanity active, he needs nothing, he is a whole in himself; without distinguishing between emotions, he delights at one and the same time in his spiritual and mental activity and in his sensual life. It is a quite different mood in which the sentimental poet places him. Here he merely feels a lively *urge* to produce the harmony in himself which he really felt there, to make of himself a whole, to bring humanity in himself to a complete expression. Thus here the spirit is in movement, it is excited, it hovers between conflicting feelings, while there it is calm, relaxed, at one with itself and completely satisfied.

But if the naive poet has the advantage over the sentimental one on the side of reality and brings to a real existence that for which the other can only awaken a lively urge, so the latter again has the great advantage over the former in that he is able to give the urge a *greater object* than the former did and could do. All reality, as we know, falls short of the ideal; everything which exists has its boundaries, but thought is boundless. The naive poet therefore suffers under these limitations to which all that is sensual is subject, while on the other hand the unconditional freedom of the capacity for ideas profits the sentimental poet. Of course the former fulfils his task but the task itself is somewhat limited; the latter indeed does not quite fulfil his but his task is infinite. On this matter too everyone can learn from his own experience. One turns with facility and with pleasure from the naive poet towards the living present; the sentimental poet will always put one out of tune with real life for a few moments. This has the result that, because our spirit here has, as it were, been stretched beyond its natural compass by the infinity of the idea, so nothing actually present can any longer satisfy it. We prefer to sink in contemplation into ourselves where we find nourishment for the awakened desire in the world of ideas, instead of striving to go out of ourselves towards sensual objects. Sentimental poetry means the birth of retirement and stillness and it also invites one to seek these; naive poetry is the child of life and leads us back to life.

I have called naive literature a *favour from nature* in order to remind you that contemplation has no share in it. It is a lucky throw,

in need of no improvement if it succeeds but also incapable of any if it misses. When the naive genius feels, his whole task is fulfilled; here lies his strength and his limitation. If the naive genius has not therefore *felt* in a poetic way, that is, in a completely human way right at the outset, then this lack cannot be made good by any art. The critics can only help him to attain an insight into his fault but they cannot put any beauty in its place. The naive genius must do everything through his nature, he is able to achieve little through his freedom; and he will fulfil his purpose as soon as ever nature is effective in him according to an inner necessity. Now of course everything is necessary which comes about through nature and that is true too of every product no matter how unsuccessful of the naive genius, from whom nothing is further than caprice; but the need of the moment is one thing and the inner necessity of the whole another. Regarded as a whole, nature is independent and infinite; in every individual effect on the other hand it is needy and limited. This applies therefore, too, to the nature of the poet. Even the happiest moment in which he may find himself is dependent on a foregoing one; one can only attribute to it therefore a conditional necessity. Now, however, the task passes to the writer to make an individual state equal to the human whole, consequently to base it absolutely and necessarily on itself. Thus, from the moment of inspiration any trace of a temporal need must be removed and the subject itself, no matter how limited it may be, may not limit the poet. One readily grasps that this is only possible in so far as the poet already brings an absolute freedom and richness of talent to the subject and in so far as he is practised in embracing everything with his whole humanity. But he can only receive this practice from the world in which he lives and from which he is touched directly. The naive genius rests, therefore, in a state of dependence on experience of which the sentimental genius knows nothing. This latter, as we know, begins his operations at the point where the former concludes his; his strength consists of complementing an incomplete subject *from within himself* and of placing himself through his own power from a limited state into a state of freedom. The naive poetic genius needs, therefore, support from outside while the sentimental nourishes and purifies himself from within; a nature rich in forms, a poetic world, a naive humanity must look

around itself, since in the sensations of the senses it must complete its work. If this support from outside is lacking and if the naive genius sees himself surrounded by uninteresting material, then only two things can happen. If the poetic genre predominates with him, he departs from his *type* and becomes sentimental in order only to be poetic or if the type retains the upper hand, he departs from his *genre* and becomes base nature only in order to remain nature. The first was probably the case with the most elegant sentimental poets in the old Roman world and in modern times. If they had been born in another era or transplanted under another sky, they who now touch us by means of ideas would have enchanted us by means of their individual truth and naive beauty. A poet who in a base world cannot leave nature can scarcely protect himself completely from the *second*.

Real nature, that is; but *true* nature which is the *subject* of naive poetry cannot be carefully enough distinguished from this. Real nature exists everywhere but true nature is all the rarer; because for it an inner necessity of existence is needed. Real nature is every explosion of passion, be it never so base, and this may be true nature also but is not true *human* nature; for this demands in every utterance a share of independent ability whose expression is always dignified. Every moral baseness is real human nature but let us hope that it is not true human nature; for this cannot be other than noble. It should not be overlooked to what tastelessness this confusion of real nature with true human nature has led in criticism as well as in practice, what trivialities are allowed in poetry, even praised, because, unfortunately! they are real nature, how people rejoice to see caricatures which already frighten one from the real world carefully preserved in the poetic world and imitated from life. Of course the poet may imitate base nature too and in satire this is already contained in the term itself; but in this his own noble nature must *transform* the subject rather than that the base material should drag the imitator down with it to earth. If, at least in the moment in which he depicts, he himself is only true human nature, then it does not matter what he depicts for us; but it is only ever from such a man that we can bear a faithful picture of reality. Woe to us readers when the caricature is mirrored in a caricature, when the scourge of satire falls into the hands of him whom nature

intended to wield a much more serious whip, when men, denuded of all one calls poetic spirit, only possess the ape-like talent of base imitation and exercise it in a horrible and dreadful way at the cost of our taste!

But as I said, base nature can become dangerous for even the truly naive poet; for in the last analysis that noble harmony between thinking and feeling which constitutes its character is yet only an *idea* which is never quite attained to in reality; and even in the most fortunate geniuses of this type responsiveness will always somewhat preponderate over spontaneity. Responsiveness is, however, always more or less dependent on the outward impression and only a continuous activity on the part of the productive talent, an activity which is not to be expected of human nature, would be able to prevent the material from exerting a blind force at times over the responsiveness. Whenever this is the case, however, the poetic emotion becomes a base emotion (65).

No genius of the naive type, from *Homer* down to *Bodmer* (66), has completely avoided this hazard; but of course it is most dangerous to those who have to guard against base nature from outside or who are depraved through lack of inner discipline. The former is the reason why even cultivated writers do not always remain free of banality and the latter has often prevented many a superb talent from taking possession of that position to which nature called it. The writer of comedies whose genius is nourished most by real life is, for just that reason, most exposed to banality, as even the example of *Aristophanes* and *Plautus* (67) and almost all later writers who have trodden in their footsteps teaches. How low does not noble *Shakespeare* let us sink at times, with what trivialities do not *Lope de Vega*, *Molière*, *Regnard*, *Goldoni* (68) torture us, into what mire does not *Holberg* (69) drag us down. *Schlegel* (70), one of the most intelligent poets of our fatherland, whose genius was not at fault that he did not shine among the best in this genre, *Gellert* (71), a truly naive poet, as well as *Rabener* (72), *Lessing* himself, if I may name him here again, *Lessing*, the cultured pupil of criticism and such a watchful judge of himself—how they all do penance more or less for the uninteresting character of that nature which they have chosen as the material for their satire. I shall name none of the *most recent*

writers in this genre for I can make no exception among them.

And it is not enough that the naive poetic spirit is in danger of approaching all too closely to base reality—through the ease with which he expresses himself and through just this greater approximation to real life he encourages the common imitator to try his skill in the poetic field. Sentimental poetry, although dangerous enough in another way, as I shall show later, at least keeps *this* rabble at a distance because not everyone can raise himself to the level of ideas; naive poetry however leads one to believe that mere feeling, mere humour, mere imitation of real nature constitute the poet. But nothing is more repulsive than when the banal character takes the notion of wanting to be lovable and naive—he who should clothe himself in all the coverings of art in order to hide his revolting nature. From this too come the unspeakable platitudes which the Germans perform under the title of naive and playful songs and in which, after a good dinner, they are accustomed to take a quite endless pleasure. Under the licence of mood, of feeling, these poor offerings are tolerated—but a mood, a feeling which cannot carefully enough be banned. The muses on the River *Pleisse* form here an especially meagre choir and they are not answered in any better harmony by the muses on the *Leine* and the *Elbe* (73). Just as these jokes are insipid, so can paltry emotion be heard on our tragic stage, an emotion which instead of imitating true nature only reaches the mindless and ignoble expression of real nature so that, after such a feast of weeping, we feel as if we had been visiting the hospital or been reading *Salzman's* 'Human Misery' (74). Satirical poetry is in a much worse state and the comic novel in particular which, from its very nature, lies so close to ordinary life and should, therefore, like every border-post rightly be in the best hands. He who is the *creature* and the *caricature* of his time has truly the least calling to be the *portrayer* of his time; but since it is so easy to hunt out some funny character from among one's acquaintances, even if it is only a *fat man*, and to sketch this caricature on paper with a crude pen, all the sworn enemies of the poetic spirit feel the itch to try their botcher's hand in this area and to delight a circle of worthy friends with their beautiful infant. A finely-tuned feeling will of course never be in danger of confusing these products of base nature with the intelligent fruits of the naive genius but there is a

lack of just this fine tuning and in most cases people only want to have a need satisfied without the intellect making any demands. The concept, so much misunderstood although so true in itself, that one *relaxes* when reading the works of a noble intellect, contributes sincerely to this self-indulgence, if one can call it indulgence where there is no imitation of anything higher and reader as well as writer achieve their aim in the same manner. For base nature, if it is excited, can only relax in *emptiness*, and even a higher degree of understanding, if it is not supported by a constant cultivation of the emotions, only rests from business amid unintelligent sensual pleasure.

If the literary genius must be able to rise with free spontaneity above all the *accidental* barriers which are inseparable from each *particular* state in order to reach human nature in its absolute capacity, yet on the other hand he may not ignore the *necessary* barriers which the concept of human nature brings with it; for the absolute, but only within humanity, is his task and his sphere. We have seen that the naive genius is in fact not in danger of stepping out of this sphere, but more likely of *not quite exhausting it* if he gives too much scope to outward necessity, or the accidental need of the moment, at the cost of the inner necessity. The sentimental genius on the other hand is exposed to the danger of removing all barriers, of suspending human nature completely and of *idealising* or of elevating himself, not merely, which is right and proper, above every particular and limited reality to the absolute possibility, but of going on outside possibility itself or of *indulging in visionary ravings*. This fault of *exaggeration* is just as certainly founded in the specific nature of his method of proceeding as the opposite one of *indolence* is based in the particular kind of action of the naive genius. The naive spirit namely allows *nature* to operate unchecked in it, and since nature in her individual temporal utterances is always dependent and finite, so the naive feeling does not always remain *exalted* enough to be able to withstand the accidental stipulation of the moment. The sentimental genius on the other hand abandons reality in order to ascend to ideas and to dominate his material with free spontaneity; since, however, the intellect always strives for the unconditional according to its own laws so the sentimental genius will not always remain *sober* enough to keep itself uninterruptedly and uniformly within the restrictions

which the concept of human nature brings with it and to which the intellect, even in its freest operation, must here remain always bound. This could only come to pass through a relative degree of responsiveness which, however, in the sentimental poetic spirit is predominated over by the spontaneity just as much as it predominates over the spontaneity in the naive genius. If, therefore, in the creations of the naive genius one at times misses the *spirit*, so in the fruits of the sentimental genius one often looks in vain for the *subject-matter*. Thus both will fall into the fault of *emptiness*, although in a quite contrary way; for a subject without spirit and a play of the spirit without a subject are both a nothingness when judged aesthetically.

All poets who draw their material too onesidedly from the world of ideas and are driven to poetic creation more through an inner richness of ideas than by the force of feeling are in more or less danger of straying onto this byway. Reason in its creations takes far too little notice of the boundaries of the sensual world and the idea is always carried further than experience can follow it. If it is forced on so far, however, that not only is no particular experience able to correspond to it any more (for the ideally beautiful may and must go this far) but that it disputes the restrictions of all possible experience whatever and that in consequence, in order to make it real, human nature would have to be abandoned completely, then it is no longer a poetic but an exaggerated idea, always supposing that it announced itself as representable and poetic; for if it has not done this, then it is enough already if it only does not contradict itself. If it does contradict itself, then it is no longer exaggeration but *nonsense*; for what does not exist at all cannot overstep its own limits. But if it does not announce itself at all as a subject for the imagination, then it is just as little exaggeration; for mere thought is boundless and that which has no bounds cannot overstep them. Thus only that can be called exaggeration which offends, not of course logical, but sensual truth and yet lays claim to it. If therefore a poet has the unfortunate idea of choosing as the material for his depiction natures which are absolutely *superhuman* and *may* not be portrayed in any other way, then he can only be safe from exaggeration by relinquishing the poetic and by not even undertaking to portray his subject-matter by means of the imagination. For if he did, the imagination would either transfer its limits to the subject

and make of an absolute subject a limited *human* one (which for example all the Greek gods are and also should be), or the subject would deprive the imagination of its limits, i.e., it would suspend it, which is what exaggeration consists of.

One must distinguish the exaggerated emotion from exaggeration in the depiction: here we are only talking about the former. The object of the emotion can be unnatural but the feeling itself is nature and must therefore use nature's language. If, therefore, the exaggeration in the emotion can flow from warmth of heart and a truly poetic disposition, then exaggeration in the depiction bears witness at all times to a cold heart and very often to a lack of poetic talent. Thus it is no fault of which the sentimental poetic genius must be warned but which merely threatens the imitator without a vocation, for he by no means despises the companionship of what is banal, mindless, even base. The exaggerated emotion is not at all without truth and as a real emotion it must also necessarily have a real object. Thus it also allows a simple expression because it is nature and as it proceeds from the heart it will not fail to find the heart. But since its subject is not drawn from nature but is produced in a one-sided and artificial way by the reason, then it has also only a merely logical reality and the emotion is therefore not purely human. It is not illusion, what *Heloise* feels for Abelard, *Petrarch* for his Laura, *St Preux* for his Julie, *Werther* for his Lotte and what *Agathon*, *Phanias*, *Peregrinus Proteus* (75) (Wieland's figures, I mean) feel for their ideals; the emotion is true, only the object of it is a constructed one and lies outside of human nature. If their feeling had merely kept to the sensual truth of the objects, then it would not have been able to take this flight; on the other hand a merely arbitrary play of the fantasy without any inner value could not have been able to move the heart, for the heart is only moved through the reason. This exaggeration therefore deserves correction, not contempt, and he who mocks at it should examine himself to see if he is not perhaps so clever from heartlessness, so sensible from lack of intellect. Thus the exaggerated tenderness of gallantry and honour which characterises the novels of chivalry, especially the Spanish ones, the scrupulous delicacy, to the point of affectation, in the French and English novels (of the best type) are not only subjectively true but even seen objectively

are not valueless: they are true emotions which really have a moral source and which are only to be condemned because they overstep the limits of human truth. Without that moral reality how would it be possible that they could be shared with such depth and inwardness as experience teaches us they are. The same is true also of moral and religious over-enthusiasm and of the over-emotional love for freedom and fatherland. Since the objects of these emotions are always ideas and do not appear in outward experience (for example, what moves the political enthusiast is not what he sees but what he thinks), so the spontaneous imagination has a dangerous freedom and cannot, as in other cases, be reminded of its limits by the sensual presence of its object. But neither man on the whole nor the poet in particular may remove himself from the laws of nature in any other way than by putting himself under the opposing laws of reason; only for the ideal may he abandon reality, for freedom *must* remain bound to one of these two anchors. But the path from experience to the ideal is so long and on the way lies fantasy with its unbridled caprice. Thus it is inevitable that man on the whole and the poet in particular will be *without any law* and will consequently become the prey of visionary whimsy if, and for as long as, through the freedom of his reason, he leaves the jurisdiction of the emotions without being driven to it by the laws of reason, i.e., if he leaves nature from a desire for freedom.

Experience teaches that whole races, as well as individual men, who have removed themselves from the safe guidance of nature really find themselves in this state and it is experience which presents enough examples of a similar aberration in literature. Because the truly sentimental poetic urge, in order to elevate itself to the ideal, must go outside the limits of real nature, so the false urge goes outside all boundaries whatsoever and gets carried away as though the wild play of the imagination constituted poetic inspiration. This can happen to the true poetic genius, who either never leaves reality only for the sake of the idea, or only in moments when he has lost himself; since he, on the other hand, can be led astray through his own nature to an exaggerated way of feeling. But through his example he can seduce others to over-emotionalism because readers of lively fancy and weak understanding can copy the liberties he takes with real nature without being able to follow him as far as

his high inner necessity. The same thing happens here with the sentimental genius that we have seen with the naive. Because the latter accomplishes everything which he does by means of his nature, so the common imitator wants to show that in his own nature he does not have a worse guide. Masterpieces of the naive type will therefore usually have the most banal and dirty impression of ordinary nature in their train and masterpieces of the sentimental type will have a numerous army of fantastic productions in theirs, as can easily be seen in the literature of any people.

With regard to poetry two principles are in use which are in themselves completely correct, but in the sense in which they are usually employed they cancel each other out. Of the first 'that literature serves to give pleasure and relaxation' we have already said above that it is favourable in no small degree to emptiness and platitude in poetic representations; the second principle 'that it should serve towards the moral ennoblement of man' protects the exaggerated. It is not superfluous to look somewhat closer at both principles which are quoted so often, are often interpreted so incorrectly and are applied so mistakenly.

The transition from a violent state to one which is natural to us is what we call relaxation. Hence everything depends here on what constitutes for us our natural state and what we mean by a violent one. If the first for us is merely an uncontrolled play of our physical powers and a liberation from every restriction, then every activity of the reason, because every such activity means opposition to sensuality, does violence to us and peace of mind accompanied by sensual excitement is the real ideal of relaxation. If on the other hand we take our natural state to be an unlimited capacity for any human utterance and the ability to be able to dispose with equal freedom over all our powers, then every separation and *particularisation* of these powers is a violent state and the ideal of relaxation is the restoration of our complete nature after such a one-sided stimulation. The first ideal therefore is set merely by the needs of *sensual* nature, the second through the independence of *human* nature. Which of these two types of relaxation literature may and must accord us is probably in theory quite obvious; for no one will want to have the reputation that he could be tempted to place the ideal of humanity below the ideal of animality. Nonetheless

the demands which one usually makes of poetic works in real life are pre-eminently taken from the sensual ideal and in most cases according to this is determined—not the *respect* but the *liking* with which one regards these works and one's *favourite* is chosen. The mental state of most men is on the one hand stimulating and exhausting *work* and on the other enervating *pleasure*. The first, however, as we know, makes the sensual need for peace of mind and for a cessation of activity much more urgent than the moral need for harmony and for an absolute freedom of activity, because above all things *nature* must first be satisfied before the *spirit* can make a *demand*; the spirit confines and paralyses the moral desires themselves which must emit that demand. Thus nothing is more disadvantageous to our responsiveness to the truly beautiful than both these all too common emotional moods among men, and this explains why so very few, even among the better ones, have a correct judgment in aesthetic matters. Beauty is the product of the harmony between spirit and senses; it speaks simultaneously to all the capabilities of man and therefore can only be felt and judged truly under the presupposition of a complete and free use of all his powers. To this one must bring an open mind, an expansive heart, a fresh and unweakened spirit, one must have one's whole nature together, which is not at all the case with those who are divided in themselves by abstract thought, hemmed in by petty rules, exhausted by strenuous attention. These indeed demand a sensual subject but not in order to continue the play of the powers of thought but in order to turn them off. They want to be free but only of a burden which tired their laziness, not of a barrier which curbed their activity.

Should one therefore still wonder at the success of mediocrity and emptiness in aesthetic matters and at the revenge of weak minds against the true and energetically beautiful? They counted on relaxation from the latter but on a relaxation according to their need and according to their poor ideas and with annoyance they discover that an expression of strength is first expected of them for which even in their best moments the ability was lacking. On the other hand they are welcome there as they already are; for no matter how little strength they bring with them, they need still less, in order to exhaust the spirit of their author. The burden of thought has here suddenly been lifted from them and relaxed nature can

cultivate itself in the happy enjoyment of nothing on the soft pillow of *platitude*. In the temple of Thalia and Melpomene (76) as it is organised with us, the beloved goddess is enthroned, receives the dull insensitive scholar and the exhausted business-man in her broad bosom and lulls the spirit in a magnetic sleep while she warms the stiff senses and rocks the imagination in a soft movement.

And why should one not excuse in ordinary intellects what happens to even the best often enough? The legacy which nature demands after every continuous tension and also takes without asking for it (and only for such moments is the enjoyment of beautiful works usually kept) is so little favourable to the aesthetic judgement that among the working population there will be extremely few who can judge with sureness and, what is so important here, with uniformity in matters of taste. Nothing is more usual than that the scholars expose themselves in the most ridiculous way to cultivated men of the world in their judgments on beauty and that especially the professional artistic arbiters are the laughing-stock of all connoisseurs. Their degenerate, at times exaggerated, at times crude instinct leads them astray in most cases and even if they have snapped up something theoretical with which to defend it, from this they can only form *technical* judgments (relating to the suitability of the work to its purpose) and not *aesthetic* ones which must always embrace the whole and which feeling must therefore decide. If they would only renounce the latter willingly and be content with the former, then they could still be of enough use, since the poet in his inspiration and the sensitive reader in the moment of enjoyment still easily neglect the individual element. But it is an all the more ridiculous spectacle when these crude natures, who, with all their painstaking work on themselves only manage to develop at the most one single skill, set up their paltry individuality as representative of the general feeling and in the sweat of their brow—pronounce judgment on the beautiful.

As we have seen, far too narrow boundaries are usually set for the concept of *relaxation* which poetry can accord because it is usually linked too onesidedly to the mere needs of sensuality. In the exactly opposite way the concept of the *ennobling* force which is supposed to be the intention of the poet is usually given far too wide a scope because it is determined too onesidedly according to the mere idea.

According to the idea, namely, this ennoblement always becomes infinite because the reason in its demands is not tied to the necessary barriers of the world of the senses and does not stop until it reaches absolute perfection. Nothing of which one can think anything higher can satisfy it; no need of finite nature can excuse one before her stern judgment; it recognises no other limits than those of thought and of this we know that it soars above all the limits of time and space. Such an ideal of ennoblement which reason in its pure legislation marks out for us may be taken by the poet as his goal just as little as that lowly ideal of relaxation which sensuality proposes, for he should indeed free humanity from all accidental barriers but without suspending the concept of it and without removing its necessary boundaries. Whatever he allows himself above and beyond these guide-lines is exaggeration and to this he is led astray only all too easily by a falsely-understood concept of ennoblement. But the bad thing is that he cannot really elevate himself to the true ideal of human ennoblement without taking a few steps outside of it. For in order to get there he must leave reality, for, as with every ideal, he can draw it only from inner and moral sources. Not in the world which surrounds him and in the noise of active life, no, only in his heart does he find it and only in the stillness of solitary contemplation does he find his heart. But this seclusion from life will not always remove from his eyes merely the accidental barriers of humanity, it will frequently also remove the necessary and insuperable ones and while he is looking for pure form, he will be in danger of losing all content. Reason will carry on its business much too divorced from experience and what the contemplative spirit has found on the quiet path of thought, the active man will not be able to bring to fruition on the stressful path of life. So that which was alone able to form the wise man usually produces the over-emotional visionary, and the merit of the wise man may rest less in the fact that he has not become a visionary than that he has not remained one.

Since therefore it should neither be left to the active portion of mankind to decide the concept of relaxation according to its needs, nor to the contemplative portion to determine the concept of ennoblement according to its speculations, if that concept is not to turn out too physical and unworthy of poetry and this concept

too metaphysical and high-flown for poetry—these two concepts, however, as experience teaches, dominate the general judgment on poetry and poetic works, so in order to interpret them we must look around for a class of people who without working are active and can idealise without becoming over-emotional, who unite in themselves all the realities of life with the fewest possible of its limitations and are carried by the current of events without becoming prey to them. Only such a group can preserve the beautiful whole of human nature which is momentarily destroyed by work and continually destroyed by a life of work and in all that is purely human let their *feelings* legislate for the general judgment. Whether such a group really exists or rather whether that group which really exists with similar outward characteristics corresponds inwardly also to this concept is another question with which I am not concerned here. If it does not correspond to it, then it has only itself to blame, for the contrasting group of workers has at least the satisfaction of considering itself as a victim of its profession. In such a category of people (which I merely propose here as an idea and by no means want to have regarded as a fact) the naive character would combine with the sentimental in such a way that each would preserve the other from its extreme and while the naive protected the spirit from exaggeration, the sentimental would keep it safe from insipidity. For we must finally admit that neither the naive nor the sentimental character, regarded alone, can quite exhaust the ideal of noble humanity which can only emerge from the close combination of both.

Of course as long as one exalts both characters to the *poetic*, as we have been considering them hitherto, many of the limitations adhering to them are lost and even the contrast between them becomes less noticeable according as they become poetic to an even higher degree; for the poetic mood is an independent whole in which all differences and all deficiencies vanish. But for just this reason, because it is only in the concept of the poetic that both kinds of feeling can come together, their mutual difference and indigence become noticeable to the same degree as they put off the poetic character; and this is the case in ordinary life. The more they descend to this, the more they lose of that generic character which brings them closer together, until finally in their

caricatures only the characteristics of type remain which oppose them to one another.



This brings me to a very remarkable psychological antagonism among people in a century which is in the process of civilisation, an antagonism which, because it is radical and based on the inner spiritual make-up, causes a worse division among men than the accidental conflict of interests can ever produce, which deprives the artist and poet of all hope of pleasing and of moving people generally, which is their task; which makes it impossible for the philosopher even when he has done everything, to convince people in general, which finally will never allow man in practical life to see his way of acting generally approved of, in short a conflict which is the cause of the fact that no work of the spirit and no action of the heart can succeed completely with one group of people without calling down a condemnation on itself from the other. This conflict is without doubt as old as the beginning of culture and will scarcely be settled before the end of culture except in a few individuals who one hopes always existed and will always exist; but though one of its effects is this, that it destroys every attempt at settling it because neither side can be brought to admit a fault on its side and a reality on the other, yet it is still achievement enough to pursue such an important division to its ultimate source and in doing so to reduce the actual matter of the conflict at least to a simpler formula.

The true concept can be reached best if, as I just remarked, one abstracts from the naive as well as from the sentimental character what is poetic in both. Then nothing remains over from the first but a sober spirit of observation with regard to the theoretical and a firm attachment to the uniform evidence of the senses and, with regard to the practical, a resigned submission to the necessity (not, however, to the blind need) of nature, a resignation, therefore, to that which is and which must be. From the sentimental character nothing remains over except a restless spirit of speculation in theoretical things which urges on to the absolute in all perception, a moral rigorism in practical things which insists on the absolute

in the actions of the will. Whoever belongs to the first group can be called a *realist* and whoever belongs to the second, an *idealist*, though one should not think either of the good or of the bad sense which is connected with these names in metaphysics (77).

Since the realist lets himself be determined by the necessity of nature and the idealist by the necessity of reason determines himself, the same relationship must exist between them as can be found between the effects of nature and the actions of the reason. Nature, as we know, although an infinite power as a whole, shows herself in every individual effect to be dependent and needy; only in the wholeness of her phenomena does she express an independent and great character. All that is individual in her only exists because something else does; nothing springs from itself, everything only springs from the previous element in order to lead to the following one. But just this reciprocal relationship between the phenomena assures each its existence through the existence of the other and the constancy and necessity of their effects is indivisible from the dependence on them. Nothing is free in nature but neither is anything capricious.

And this is just how the realist shows himself to be in his *knowledge* as well as in his *deeds*. The extent of his knowledge and influence extends to everything which exists conditionally; but he never gets any farther than conditional knowledge, and the rules which he forms for himself from individual experiences are, strictly speaking, only valid once; if he elevates the rule of the moment into a general law, then without fail he will fall headlong into error. If, therefore, the realist wants to reach something absolute in his knowledge, then he must attempt it in the same way that nature becomes infinite, that is by means of the whole and in the completeness of experience. Since however the total of experience is never completely achieved, a comparative universality is the highest which the realist reaches in his knowledge. He builds his insight on the recurrence of similar cases and will therefore judge correctly in all that is governed by order; on the other hand in all which presents itself for the first time his wisdom returns to its beginnings.

What is true of the knowledge of a realist is true too of his (moral) actions. His character has morality but this consists, according to its purest concept, not in an individual deed, but only in the sum

total of his life. In each particular case he will be determined by outward causes and outward aims; only that those causes are not accidental, those aims are not momentary, but flow subjectively from the whole of nature and relate objectively to it. The impulses of his will are therefore, in the strictest sense, neither free enough nor morally pure enough because they are caused by something other than the law alone as their object; but they are just as little blind and materialistic urges because this something other is the absolute whole of nature, consequently something independent and necessary. Thus does ordinary human reason, the supreme talent of the realist, show itself constantly in thinking and in behaviour. From the particular case he draws the rules for his judgments, from an inner emotion the rules for his actions; but with a happy instinct he is able to remove from both all that is momentary and accidental. With this method he gets on excellently on the whole and will scarcely have a significant mistake with which to reproach himself; it is only that in no special case will he be able to lay claim to greatness and worth. This is merely the price of independence and freedom and in his individual actions we see too little trace of them.

Things are quite different with the idealist who takes his perceptions and his motives from himself and from reason alone. If nature in its individual effects always seems dependent and limited, so the reason gives the character of independence and perfection to every individual action. It draws everything from itself and relates everything to itself. What happens through it happens only for its sake; every concept which it proposes and every decision which it takes is an absolute value. And this is exactly how the idealist, in so far as he bears this name correctly, appears in his knowledge as well as in his actions. Not satisfied with perceptions which are valid only under certain presuppositions, he tries to penetrate to truths which do not presuppose anything more but are the basis for everything else. Only the philosophical insight satisfies him which reduces all conditional knowledge to absolute knowledge and attaches all experience to the necessary in the human spirit; the things to which the realist submits his thinking must be submitted to himself, to his capacity for thought. And here he proceeds with full authority; for if the laws of the human spirit were not at the same time the laws of the world, if reason in the last analysis

were itself subject to experience, then no experience would be possible.

But he can have got as far as absolute truths and still not be much advanced in his knowledge by this. For in the end everything is indeed subject to necessary and general laws but each individual thing is governed by accidental and particular rules; and in nature everything is individual. Thus with his philosophical knowledge he can dominate the whole and yet have achieved nothing for the particular, for the practical execution; indeed, while he is penetrating everywhere to the *supreme* causes through which everything is possible, he can easily miss the *nearest* causes through which all becomes actual; while he directs his attention everywhere to the general which makes the most diverse cases similar to each other, he can easily neglect the particular by which they differ from one another. Therefore he will be able to *embrace* a great deal with his knowledge and for just this reason will *grasp* little and will often lose in insight what he gains in the overall view. From this results the fact that if the speculative understanding despises the ordinary understanding for its *limitation*, the ordinary understanding often laughs at the speculative understanding for its *emptiness*; for knowledge always loses in definition what it gains in scope.

When judged morally, one finds a purer morality in the idealist in individual instances but much less moral uniformity on the whole. Since he is only called an idealist in so far as he takes his motives from pure reason, but the reason proves itself absolute in each of its utterances, so his individual actions, if they are moral at all, contain the *whole* character of moral independence and freedom; and if there is only in real life a truly ethical deed which would remain so also before the most rigorous judgment, then it can only be committed by the idealist. But the purer the ethical quality of his individual actions, the more accidental it is also; for constancy and necessity are indeed the character of nature, but not freedom. It is not of course as though idealism could ever come into conflict with the ethical, which would be a contradiction, but that human nature is completely incapable of a consistent idealism. If the realist even in his moral actions quietly and uniformly subordinates himself to a physical necessity, so the idealist must take flight, he must momentarily transcend his own nature and he is only capable

of anything in so far as he is inspired. Then of course he is able to achieve all the more and his behaviour will exhibit a character of nobility and greatness which one seeks in vain in the actions of the realist. But real life is not at all adapted to awaken this inspiration in him and still less to nourish it constantly. There is too much of a contrast between the absolute greatness which each time is his point of departure and the absolute smallness of the individual case to which he has to apply it. Because his will, with regard to form, is directed always to the whole, he does not want to apply it to fragments with regard to the substance and yet it is mostly only in insignificant achievements that he can prove his moral sentiments. So it happens frequently that in the unlimited ideal he overlooks the limited application and, filled with a maximum, he neglects the minimum from which alone all that is great in reality grows.

Therefore if one wants to see justice done to the realist one must judge him according to the whole context of his life; if one wants to be just to the idealist, one must stick to individual utterances of his but one must first select these. The common judgment which so much likes to decide from particulars will, therefore, maintain an indifferent silence with regard to the realist because the individual deeds of his life furnish equally little material either for praise or blame; however, it will always take sides about the idealist and will be divided between condemnation and admiration because his faults and his strength lie in the particular.

It is inevitable that with such a great divergence in their principles both parties should often be at opposite extremes to one another in their opinions and, even if they coincided in their objects and results, that they should move apart in their motives. The realist will ask *what something is good for* and will know how to value things according to what they are worth; the idealist will ask *whether they are good* and will know how to value them according to whether they are worthy. The realist does not know much about or care much for that which contains its value and purpose in itself (the whole, however, always excepted); in questions of taste he will speak up for pleasure, in questions of morals he will speak up for happiness, if he does not make the latter the very condition of ethical action; even in his religion he does not like to forget his own

advantage, only that he ennobles and sanctifies it in the ideal of the highest good. He will try to *make happy* what he loves, the idealist will try to *make it noble*. If, therefore, the realist intends in his political ideas to achieve *prosperity*, assuming that it should cost something in terms of the moral independence of the people, then the idealist, even at the risk of endangering prosperity, will direct his attention to *freedom*. *Independent circumstances* are the highest goal of the first, *independence from circumstances* the goal of the second, and this characteristic difference can be pursued throughout the thought and action of both. Thus the realist will always prove his partiality by *giving* and the idealist by *receiving*; by what he sacrifices in his magnanimity everyone betrays what he prizes most highly. The idealist will pay for the faults of his system with his individuality and his temporal circumstances, but he does not regard this sacrifice; the realist expiates the faults in his with his personal dignity but he knows nothing of this sacrifice. His system proves adequate for all of which he has knowledge and for which he feels a need—what do goods of which he has no inkling and in which he has no belief matter to him? It is enough for him if he has possessions, the earth is his and his mind is clear and satisfaction dwells in his breast. The idealist has by no means such a happy fate. It is not enough that he often falls out with fortune because he delayed in taking time by the forelock, he falls out with himself too; neither his knowledge nor his actions can satisfy him. What he demands of himself is infinite but all that he achieves is limited. This severity which he exhibits towards himself is not contradicted by his behaviour towards others. Of course he is magnanimous because he remembers his ego less when with others; but he is often unfair because he just as easily forgets the ego in others. The realist on the other hand is less magnanimous; but he is fairer since he judges all things more *in their limitation*. He can forgive what is base, even what is mean in thought and action, only the capricious, the eccentric cannot be forgiven; the idealist on the contrary is a sworn enemy of all that is petty and banal and will reconcile himself even to what is extravagant and monstrous if only it bears witness to a great talent. The former shows himself to be a philanthropist without having a very high idea of men or mankind; the latter has such a high opinion of mankind that because of it he is in danger of despising men.

The realist on his own would never have extended the circle of mankind beyond the boundaries of the world of the senses, would never have made the human spirit acquainted with its independent greatness and freedom; for him all that is absolute in humanity is only a beautiful chimera and the belief in it is not much better than deluded raving, because he never sees man in his pure capacity, always only in a particular and therefore limited function. But the idealist on his own would just as little have cultivated the powers of the senses and have educated man as a natural being, which after all is just as essential a part of his destiny and the condition for all moral ennoblement. The striving of the idealist goes too far above the life of the senses and too much beyond the present; he only wants to sow and plant for the whole, for eternity, and in doing so forgets that the whole is only the perfected compass of the individual, that eternity is only the sum of minutes. The world, as the realist would like to form it around himself and really does form it, is a well-laid-out garden where everything earns its place and everything which does not bear fruit is banned; the world in the hands of the idealist is nature, less well-used but designed on a larger scale. It does not occur to the former that man could exist for something other than to live well and happily and that he should only put down roots in order to send the trunk upwards. It does not occur to the latter that he must above all things live well in order to think in a uniformly good and noble way and that the trunk of the tree is ruined if the roots are lacking.

If something is left out of a system for which a pressing and unavoidable need is found in nature, then nature can only be satisfied by an inconsistency against the system. Here, too, both parts are guilty of such an inconsistency and it proves, if it could have remained doubtful until now, at once the onesidedness of both systems and the rich value of human nature. I do not even need to prove especially with regard to the idealist that he must of necessity step outside his system as soon as he intends to achieve a certain effect; for all definite existence is subject to temporal conditions and comes to pass according to empirical laws. On the other hand, with regard to the realist, it could appear more doubtful if he cannot already within his system satisfy all the necessary demands of mankind. If one asks the realist, why do you do what is right and

suffer what is necessary? Then in the spirit of his system he will answer: because nature implies this, because it must be so. But with this the question is by no means answered for we are not speaking of what nature implies but what man wants; for he can also *not* want what must be. One can therefore ask him again: why then do you want what must be? Why does your free will subordinate itself to this natural necessity when it could just as well oppose it (even if without success, which is not under discussion here) and does really oppose it in millions of your fellow-men? You cannot say, because all other natural beings subordinate themselves to it, for you alone have a will, yes, you feel that your subordination must be a voluntary one. Therefore you subordinate yourself, if it happens voluntarily, not to the necessity of nature but to the *idea* of it; for the former merely forces you blindly as it forces the worm; but it can have no power over your will since you, even when crushed by it, can have a different will. From where, however, do you get this idea of the necessity of nature? Certainly not from experience which supplies you only with the individual workings of nature but no nature (as a whole) and only individual realities but no necessity. Therefore you go above nature and behave in an idealistic way as soon as you either *act morally* or only do not want to *suffer blindly*. It is therefore obvious that the realist acts more worthily than he admits in his theory just as the idealist thinks in a more lofty way than he acts. Without admitting it to himself, the former proves, through the whole tenor of his life, the independence of human nature, the latter through his individual actions the paltriness of it.

I shall not need to prove to an attentive and impartial reader after the description given here (whose truth even he can admit who does not accept the result) that the ideal of human nature is divided between the two but is completely achieved by neither. Experience and reason both have their own privileges and neither can trespass on the territory of the other without causing evil consequences either for the inner or the outer state of man. Experience alone can teach us what exists under certain conditions, what results under certain presuppositions, what must happen to achieve certain aims. Reason alone can teach us, on the contrary, what is valid without any condition and what must necessarily be. If

we therefore presume to find out something about the outward existence of things with our reason alone then we are simply engaging in empty play, and the result will come to nothing; for all existence is subject to conditions and reason determines unconditionally. However, if we allow an accidental event to decide over what the mere concept of our own existence brings with it, then we make ourselves into an empty plaything of chance and our personality will come to nothing. In the first case therefore it is all up with the *value* (the temporal worth) of our life, in the second with the *dignity* (the moral worth) of our life.

Of course in our depiction up to now we have accorded the realist a moral worth and the idealist a value in reality but merely in so far as neither behaves consistently and nature functions more powerfully in them than their system. But although neither quite corresponds to the ideal of perfect mankind, yet between the two there is the important difference that the realist in no single case satisfies mankind's concept of reason but never contradicts mankind's concept of the understanding either, while the idealist in individual cases approaches the highest concept of mankind but on the other hand often remains beneath even the lowest concept of it. However, in the practice of life it is much more important that the whole should remain *uniformly* humanly good than that the individual should be *accidentally* divine—and if therefore the idealist is more skilful as a subjective ego in awakening in us a great idea of what mankind is capable of and in inspiring us with respect for its destiny, only the realist can carry it out with constancy in practice and preserve the species in its eternal boundaries. The former is indeed a more noble but a much less perfect being; the latter indeed appears continuously less noble but is all the more perfect; for nobility lies in the proof of a great capacity but perfection lies in the tenor of the whole and in the real actual deed.

What is true of both characters in their best sense becomes even more marked in the *caricatures* of each of them. True realism is philanthropic in its effects and only less noble in its source; false realism is despicable in its source and only somewhat less corrupting in its effects. The true realist indeed subjugates himself to nature and its necessity, but nature as a whole, not its blind and momentary *needs*. With freedom he embraces and follows its laws and he will

always subordinate the individual to the general; therefore it cannot fail to come about that he will agree with the true idealist in the final result, however different the path which each takes. The common empiricist, however, subjugates himself to nature as to a power and with indiscriminate blind submission. His judgments, his strivings are restricted to the individual; he believes and understands only what he can touch; he only esteems what corrects him through the senses. Therefore he is nothing more than what outward impressions have accidentally made of him; his selfhood is suppressed and as a man he has absolutely no value and no dignity. But as a thing he is still something, he can still be of use for something. For nature to whom he has given himself up blindly does not let him quite sink; her eternal boundaries protect him, her inexhaustible aids save him as soon as he gives up his freedom without reservation. Although in this state he knows of no laws, yet they rule over him unrecognised, and however much his individual strivings may be in conflict with the whole, yet the whole will still unfailingly know how to maintain itself against it. There are enough men, enough peoples even, who live in this despicable state, who exist merely through the mercy of the natural law without any selfhood and therefore are only of use for *something*; but that they even live and exist proves that this state is not quite valueless.

If on the other hand the effects of true idealism are unsure and often dangerous, then the effects of false idealism are terrible. The true idealist only abandons nature and experience because he does not find here the unchangeable, the unconditionally necessary for which reason bids him strive; the deluded visionary leaves nature from mere caprice, in order to be able to give in, all the more freely, to the self-will of the desires and the whims of the imagination. He does not place his freedom in independence from physical needs, but in licence from moral needs. The visionary therefore does not merely deny human character—he denies all character, he is completely without law, therefore he is nothing at all and is good for nothing. But just because this deluded visionary quality is no aberration of nature but of freedom and therefore springs from a disposition worthy of respect in itself which is infinitely perfectible, so it leads also to a never-ending fall into a bottomless pit and can only end in complete destruction.

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NOTES

Notes beginning with (S) are by Schiller. All others are by the translator. So many historical figures, writers, artists and literary works are mentioned in the text that to provide a note on each would have been both too unwieldy and too much a duplication of standard reference works. The policy adopted, therefore, was to provide notes on all German writers and works but only on such other figures and works as are mentioned more than once or which are discussed by Schiller as part of his argument. Thus there are notes on Fielding and Sterne, Rousseau and Ariosto, but not on Cervantes and Hippocrates, Raphael and Peter the Great. The interested reader is referred for further information to the comprehensive and copious notes in German on pp. 278-314 of Vol. 21 of the canonical edition of Schiller's works, the so-called *Nationalausgabe*, edited by Benno von Wiese with contributions from Helmut Koopmann, Weimar 1963. (As stated in *A Note on the Translation*, the text of the essay itself can be found in Vol. 20 of the same edition).

1: (S) Kant, to my knowledge the first to begin to reflect independently on this phenomenon, reminds us that, if we were to find the song of the nightingale imitated by a human being to the highest degree of illusion and, filled with emotion, gave ourselves up to the impression caused by it, all our pleasure would vanish with the destruction of this illusion. Cf. the chapter *On the Intellectual Interest in the Beautiful* in the Critique of Aesthetic Judgment. Whoever has learned to admire this author only as a great thinker will be pleased to encounter a trace of his heart here and will convince himself by this discovery of the high philosophical vocation of this man (a vocation which absolutely requires that both characteristics be combined).

2: (S) In a note on the Analitic of the Sublime (Critique of Aesthetic Judgment, p. 255 of the first edition [this corresponds to paragraph 54 of *The Critique of Judgment*. HWOK]) Kant similarly distinguishes these three different components in the feeling of the naive but he gives a different explanation for them. 'Something combined from both (the animal feeling of pleasure and the spiritual feeling of respect) is to be found in the naiveté which is the outburst of that integrity, originally natural to men, against the art of pretence which has become his second nature. One laughs at the simplicity which does not yet know how to disguise itself and

yet rejoices in the simplicity of nature which here thwarts that art. One was expecting the everyday custom of the artificial phrase, carefully calculated to produce a good effect, and lo and behold, it is uncorrupt innocent nature, which one did not at all expect to meet, and which he who let it appear did not at all intend to reveal. That the beautiful but false appearance, which usually means a great deal in our judgment, is here brought to nothing, that, as it were, the rogue in us is suddenly exposed, this calls forth, in two opposing directions, the movements of the heart, which gives the body a healthy jolt. However, the fact that something which is immeasurably better than any received set of manners, that is, purity of thought (or at least the disposition towards it), has not yet been quite extinguished in human nature, this introduces seriousness and respect into this operation of the judgment. Because, however, its appearance is only short-lived and the covering of pretence is quickly pulled up over it again, so a sense of regret is mixed in with it, a feeling of tenderness which can be combined very easily with a good-humoured laugh, and usually is combined with it, and also makes amends for the embarrassment of him who has provided the material for it over the fact that he was not yet cunning enough in the ways of men.'—I admit that this way of explaining it does not quite satisfy me, principally because it maintains with regard to all naiveté what is true at most of a type or species of naiveté, the naiveté of surprise of which I shall speak below. It does indeed excite laughter when someone exposes himself by his naiveté, and in many cases this laughter may come from a previous expectation which has dissolved into nothing. But the most noble kind of naiveté, that of disposition, also always excites a smile which can hardly have as its basis an expectation dissolved into nothing but which is simply to be explained only from the contrast between certain behaviour and the accepted and expected forms. I also doubt that the regret which is mixed with our emotions in the case of naiveté of the last kind refers to the naive person and not rather to ourselves, or rather humanity as a whole, whose decadence we are reminded of on such an occasion. It is too obviously a moral sadness which must have a more noble object than the physical evils with which integrity is threatened in the usual course of worldly affairs and this object can hardly be anything else than the loss of truth and simplicity in humanity.

3: (S) I should perhaps say quite briefly: the triumph of truth over pretence; but the term naiveté seems to me to include somewhat more, because all simplicity, which triumphs over affectation,

and natural freedom, which triumphs over stiffness and compulsion, excite a similar feeling in us.

4: (S) A child is badly behaved when it acts contrary to the precepts of a good education out of greed, frivolity, rashness; but it is naive when it dispenses with the affectation of a foolish education, the stiff postures of the dancing master and such like from a free and healthy nature. The same thing happens with naïveté in an abstract sense when it is applied to the unreasoning. No one would find it a naive sight when the weeds take over in a badly-tended garden; but there is something naive about the free growth of branches reaching outwards and destroying the painstaking work of the shears in a French garden. It is not in the least naive when a trained horse performs his lesson badly from natural clumsiness but there is something naive when it forgets its lesson from a sense of natural freedom.

5: (S) Since the naive merely consists of the form in which something is done or said, then this characteristic vanishes from sight as soon as the thing itself, either through its causes or through its consequences, makes a stronger or even a contradictory impression. By a naïveté of this kind even a crime can be discovered; but then we neither have the leisure nor the time to direct our attention to the form of the discovery and our disgust at the person's character swallows up our pleasure in his naturalness. Just as our feeling of shock takes away our moral joy in the integrity of nature as soon as we find out a crime through naïveté, so in the same way, as soon as we see someone put in danger by his own naïveté, the pity this excites stifles our malice.

6: This refers to Vol. 5, p.1 of the *Allgemeine Biographie* by Johann Matthias Schröckh (1733-1808) which appeared in eight parts between 1767 and 1789.

7: 'Columbus and the egg' is a common expression in German meaning 'the obvious solution to a problem which it takes a genius to see' and refers to the story according to which Columbus was able to make an egg stand by bashing the shell at one end.

8: Ludovico Ariosto (1474-1533), Italian poet, principally famous for his verse epic *Orlando Furioso* which appeared in 1516 and in an extended version in 1532.

9: Torquato Tasso (1544-1595), Italian poet employed like Ariosto at the court of the Este family in Ferrara and the author of, among other things, the verse epic *La Gerusalemme Liberata* (1574) and the pastoral drama *Aminta* (1573).

10: Henry Fielding (1707-1754) whose novel *The History of Tom*

Jones A Foundling (1749) is mentioned several times in this essay.

11: Laurence Sterne (1713-1768), the 18th century humorist, author of *Tristram Shandy* (1759-1767) and *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy by Mr. Yorick* (1768).

12: (S) But again only among the Greeks; for just such a lively movement and such a rich plenitude of human life as surrounded the Greeks were necessary in order to put life into the inanimate and to pursue the image of humanity with such zeal. *Ossian's* human world [see note 31 below. HWOK.], for example, was impoverished and monotonous; the lifeless world around him, however, was huge, colossal and powerful, forced itself therefore upon one's attention and asserted its rights even over men. Thus in the songs of this poet lifeless nature (in contrast to man) emerges much more strongly as the object of emotion. However, *Ossian* too mourns the decay of humanity and, even though the circle of culture and its corruption was so small among his race, yet the experience of it was lively and penetrating enough to drive the deeply emotional and moral bard back to the inanimate and to pour out in his songs that elegiac tone which makes them so touching and attractive to us.

13: This refers to Goethe's novel in letters *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (*The Sorrows of Young Werther*: 1774) Book II, the letter of 15th March. Here Werther describes the painful incident where he is invited to sup with a noble lord. He absentmindedly stays on afterwards for a soirée to which he has not been invited and is asked to leave, as he is of lower rank than the other guests. Werther tells how the incident closes: 'I extricated myself quietly from the elevated gathering, went, sat into a cab and drove to M . . . , in order to watch the sun go down from the hill there and meanwhile read in my Homer the wonderful canto which tells how Ulysses was entertained by the excellent swineherd'. The episode he chooses to read in Homer is, of course, an ironic counterpart to his contumelious treatment by the German nobility.

14: This refers to an episode at the beginning of Ariosto's verse epic, *Orlando Furioso*. Rinaldo, the Lord of Montalbano, and Ferraù, the Spanish Moor, are both suitors of the beautiful Angelica. Ferraù fights Rinaldo on Angelica's behalf but while they are fighting, she escapes them both. They therefore decide to stop fighting in order to pursue her and as Rinaldo has no horse, his rival Ferraù allows him to mount behind him.

15: (S) *Orlando Furioso*, First Canto, stanza 22.

16: (S) *The Iliad*, translation by Voss, vol.I, p.153. [This translation by Johann Heinrich Voss (1751-1826) appeared in 1793. Schiller

did not read Greek. HWOK.]

17: (S) It is perhaps not superfluous to remind ourselves that, when the modern poets are contrasted here with the ancients, not only the difference in period but also the difference in manner is meant. In modern, even in the most recent periods, we have naive works too in all classes, even if no longer of a completely pure type; and among the old Latin poets, even among the Greeks, there is no dearth of sentimental poets. Not only in the same poet but in the same work does one often encounter both types united, as for example in *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, and products of this kind will always make the greater effect.

18: (S) As a naive poet it was allowable for Molière to let it depend on the verdict of his maid-servant what should stand and what should be deleted in his comedies; one could have wished that the masters of the French cothurn had at times tested their tragedies in the same way. But I should not like to advise that one institute a similar test with Klopstock's Odes, with the most beautiful passages in the *Messiah*, in *Paradise Lost*, in *Nathan the Wise* and many other pieces. But what am I saying? The test really has been introduced and Molière's maid reasons long and large about poetry, art and suchlike in our critical libraries, philosophical and literary annuals and travel books, only, as is right, a little more tastelessly on German soil than on French and in a way that is suitable for the servants' hall of German literature.

19: Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1724-1803), author of the extremely influential epic poem *Der Messias* (*The Messiah*: 1748-1773) but also of religious and love poetry.

20: (S) He who pays attention to the impression which naive works make on him and is able to separate the share which is due to the content will find this impression, even with very pathetic subjects, always cheerful, always pure, always calm; with sentimental ones it will always be somewhat serious and stimulating. This comes about because with naive depictions, whatever they are dealing with, we always rejoice at the truth, at the living presence of the object in our imagination and do not look for anything more than this. With sentimental ones on the other hand, we have to unite a concept of the imagination with an idea of the reason and therefore always hover between two different states.

21: Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), French moralist and thinker, author of the novel *Julie ou la nouvelle Héloïse* (1761).

22: Albrecht von Haller (1708-1777), Swiss poet and doctor whose best-known work is a long poem entitled *Die Alpen* (*The Alps*: 1729).

23: This refers to the play *Nathan der Weise* (*Nathan the Wise*) by the dramatist and critic of the German Enlightenment, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-1781). It appeared in 1779.

24: (S) In *Nathan the Wise* this has not happened, here the frosty nature of the material has cooled the whole work of art down. But Lessing knew himself that he was writing no tragedy and only humanly forgot in his own case the precept expounded in his dramatic theory that the poet is not authorised to use the tragic form for any purpose other than a tragic one. Without very important changes it would scarcely be possible to restructure this poem into a good tragedy; but with only non-essential changes it could have given us a good comedy. The pathetic would have had to be sacrificed to the latter aim, the reasoning element to the former, and there is probably no question as to which of the two constitutes the beauty of this poem.

25: Lucian (second century A.D.), Greek sophist and satirist. He castigates the tendency to wish in *The Ship or The Wishes*, schools of philosophy in *The Symposium or The New Lapiths*, the belief in the gods in *Jupiter Tragoedus*, the decadence of contemporary Rome in *Nigrinus*, flattery in *Timon* and religious swindlers in *Alexander or the False Prophet*, all satirical dialogues. Schiller quotes Nigrinus's monologue in Wieland's German translation (*Lukians Werke*, 1788-1789, Vol. I, p.35f.)

26: Tom Jones and Sophia Western are the hero and heroine respectively of Fielding's novel *The History of Tom Jones A Foundling* (1749).

27: Yorick is the first person narrator of Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy* (1768).

28: Christoph Martin Wieland (1733-1813), satirical novelist and author of plays and verse epics. His best-known works include *Agathon* (1766-1767) and *Die Abderiten* (*The Abderites*: 1774-1780).

29: *Le Huon ou L'Ingénu* (1767) and *Candide ou de l'Optimisme* (1759) are satirical novels by Voltaire (François-Marie Arouet, 1694-1778).

30: (S) I shall scarcely need to justify to readers who have a deeper insight into the material the fact that I use terms like satire, elegy and idyll in a wider sense than is usual. My purpose in doing so is in no way to change the boundaries which with good reason have been set for satire and elegy as well as idyll by previous usage; I am only looking at the type of emotion which dominates in these kinds of literature and it is well enough known that this does not allow itself to be enclosed between those narrow boundaries. It is not just

that which is called an elegy which touches us elegiacally; the dramatic and the epic poet too can move us in an elegiac way. In the 'Messiah', in Thomson's 'Seasons' [see note 38. HWOK.], in 'Paradise Lost'. in 'Gerusalemme Liberata' we find several portrayals which are otherwise only peculiar to the idyll, the elegy, the satire. The same is true more or less of almost every pathetic poem. That I, however, count the idyll itself as part of the elegiac genre would rather seem to need justification. Let it be remembered, however, that we are speaking here only of that idyll which is a type of sentimental literature and whose essence it is that nature is to be contrasted with art and the ideal with reality. Even if this does not occur expressly through the poet and if he represents the picture of uncorrupt nature or of the fulfilled ideal as pure and independent, then that contrast is still in his heart and even without his volition will betray itself in every stroke of the pen. Indeed, if this were not so, then the language which he must use, because it carries within it the spirit of the time and undergoes the influence of art, reminds us of reality with its limitations, culture with its affectation; indeed, our own heart would contrast with that picture of pure nature the experience of corruption and in this way would make our emotion elegiac even if the poet had not intended it so. This last is so inevitable that not even the highest pleasure which the most beautiful works of the naive type from ancient and modern times afford to the cultivated man remains pure for long but sooner or later is accompanied by an elegiac feeling. Finally let me remark that the division attempted here, for the very reason that it is based solely on the difference in the type of feeling, can decide nothing about the distinction between poems themselves and between poetic types; for since the poet even in the same work is not in the least bound to the one type of emotion, then that division cannot be deduced from it but from the form of the depiction.

31: This refers to *Fragments of Ancient Poetry Collected in the Highlands of Scotland* (1760f.) by James Macpherson (1736-1796). These purported to be translations from the Gaelic of the third century bard Oisín and Macpherson published several more collections of them culminating in *The Works of Ossian* in 1765. The genuineness of these poems was questioned almost immediately, by Samuel Johnson among others, and it was definitely established by 1800 that the poems were Macpherson's composition and not Oisín's. They were first translated into German by Wittenberg in 1764, into German verse by Michael Denis in 1768-1769 and later by Herder. Their influence on 18th century German writers including

the young Goethe, was enormous.

32: (S) Read for example the excellent poem entitled 'Carthon'.

33: Julie is the heroine of Rousseau's novel *Julie ou la nouvelle Héloïse* (1761).

34: Schiller is not referring here to the dramatist Heinrich von Kleist, who was too young to have published anything at the time this essay appeared, but to his ancestor Ewald von Kleist (1715-1759), poet and friend of Klopstock and Lessing.

35: This is taken from Haller's 'Trauerode, beim Absterben seiner geliebten Mariane' (Elegy on the Death of his Beloved Mariane: 1736). It was published in 1743 in the third edition of Haller's *Versuch Schweizerischer Gedichte* (*An Attempt at Writing Swiss Poetry*).

36: (S) See the poem of this name in his Works.

37: *Cissides and Paches* is a short blank verse epic composed in the year of Kleist's death (1759) and *Seneca* a tragedy in prose written the year before.

38: James Thomson (1700-1748) whose poem *The Seasons* (1726-1730) was much regarded in 18th-century Europe.

39: (S) I say *musical* in order to remind us of the dual relationship of poetry to music and to the visual arts. According to whether poetry imitates a certain *object* as the visual arts do or according to whether it merely induces a certain *state of mind* as music does without needing to have a particular object for it, it can be called graphic (*three-dimensional*) or musical. The latter expression therefore refers not only to what in poetry really, and according to its substance, is music but to all those effects which it is able to produce without dominating the imagination by means of a certain object; and in this sense I call Klopstock primarily a musical poet.

40: Edward Young (1683-1765), most famous for his verses entitled *The Complaint, or Night Thoughts on Life, Death and Immortality* (1742).

41: Johann Peter Uz (1720-1796), cheerful rococo lyric poet and the translator of Horace.

42: Michael Denis, S. J. (1729-1800), the translator of Ossian (see note 31 above).

43: Salomon Gessner (1730-1788), a Swiss landscape artist and engraver but also the author of the prose *Idyllen* (*Idylls*: 1756) and the story *Der Tod Abels* (*The Death of Abel*: 1758).

44: Johann Georg Jacobi (1740-1814), poet and friend of Wieland.

45: Heinrich Wilhelm von Gerstenberg (1737-1823), Ludwig Heinrich Christoph Hölty (1748-1776) and Leopold Friedrich Günther von Göckingk (1748-1828) were all members of the so-called Göttinger

Hain or 'Göttingen Grove', a group of poets founded in Göttingen in 1772. The group was united by its reverence for Klopstock and its desire to move away from the rationalism of the Enlightenment and from French models.

46: In what follows Schiller is referring to Goethe, whose plays *Tasso* (1790) and *Faust* (1790f.) and early novel *Werther* (1774) he mentions. The 'new novel' is *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (*Wilhelm Meister's Years of Apprenticeship*: 1795-1796).

47: (S) As Adelung defines it: 'The tendency towards touching, gentle emotions without any sensible purpose and beyond the suitable limit'.—Mr Adelung is very fortunate that he only feels on purpose and on top of that only from a sensible purpose. [Meant here is the famous dictionary by Johann Christoph Adelung (1732-1806) which appeared between 1774 and 1786. HWOK.]

48: (S) One should not indeed spoil for certain readers their paltry pleasure and what business is it ultimately of the critics if there are people who can be edified and amused by the smutty wit of a Mr Blumauer. [Alois Blumauer (1755-1798), the Austrian author of the mock-heroic epic *Die Abentheuer des frommen Helden Aeneis* (*The Adventures of the Pious Hero Aeneas*: 1784-1786). HWOK.] But the arbiters of taste should at least refrain from speaking with a certain respect of products whose existence should rather remain a secret to good taste. Neither talent nor humour can be overlooked here but it is all the more to be lamented that neither is more purified. I shall say nothing of our German comedies; poets depict the times in which they live.

49: A sentimental novel published in 1776 by Johann Martin Miller (1750-1814), another member of the 'Göttingen Grove'.

50: The correct title is *Reise in die mittäglichen Provinzen von Frankreich im Jahr 1785-1786* (*A Journey to the Southern Provinces of France in the Year 1785-1786*) and the author is Moritz August von Thümmel (1738-1817). The novel, in the form of a diary, was one of the most popular works of the day.

51: (S) With heart: for the merely sensuous fire of the portrayal and the abundant richness of the imagination do not constitute it by a long way. Therefore 'Ardinghella' [*Ardinghella und die glückseligen Inseln* (*Ardinghella and the Fortunate Isles*), a novel by Johann Jakob Wilhelm Heinse which appeared in 1787. HWOK.] for all its sensual energy and fiery colourfulness is at all times merely a sensual caricature without truth and without aesthetic dignity. Yet this strange product will always remain remarkable as an example of the almost poetic flights which mere lust is capable of taking.

52: Wieland.

53: The German Ovid is Friedrich Manso whose didactic poem *Die Kunst zu lieben* (*The Art of Loving*) appeared in Berlin in 1794.

54: Claude-Prosper Jolyot Cr billon (1707-1777), son of the dramatist and the author of numerous lascivious novels, among them *Le Sopha* (1745).

55: Jean Fran ois Marmontel (1723-1799), the author of among other things *Contes Moraux* (1761).

56: Pierre Ambroise Fran ois Choderlos de Laclos (1741-1803), a general in the Napoleonic army who wrote one novel in the libertine tradition, *Les Liaison Dangereuses* (1782).

57: Goethe was referred to as the German Propertius on account of his *Roman Elegies*.

58: Denis Diderot (1713-1784), French scholar and novelist, editor of the famous *Encyclop die*.

59: (S) If I name the immortal author of 'Agathon', 'Oberon', etc. [i.e. Wieland. HWOK.] in this company, then I must expressly declare that I do not intend to let him be confused with them. His depictions, even the most questionable in this regard, have no materialistic tendency (as a recent, rather rash critic permitted himself to say a short time ago); the author of 'Love for Love's Sake' and of so many other naive and inspired works in all of which a beautiful and noble soul is mirrored in unmistakable detail, cannot have such a tendency at all. But he seems to me to be dogged by the quite peculiar misfortune that the plan of his works makes such depictions necessary. Cold reason, which drew up the plan, demanded them from him and his feelings seem to me to be so far from favouring them that I think I can recognise cold reason still even in the execution of the plan. And just this coldness in the depiction is injurious to them when one judges them, because only the naive sensibility can justify such depictions aesthetically as well as morally. However, whether it is allowable for the poet in drawing up such a plan to expose himself in the carrying-out of it to such danger and whether a plan can ever be called poetic which, let me just admit it, cannot be carried out without shocking the chaste sensibility of the poet as well as of his reader and without causing both to linger among objects from which an ennobled feeling would so gladly distance itself—it is this which I call in question and on which I would gladly hear an intelligent verdict.

60: (S) I must remind you again that satire, elegy and idyll, here proposed as the three sole possible types of sentimental poetry, have nothing in common with the three particular types of poem

which one knows by these names except *the kind of emotion* which is peculiar to the former as well as to the latter. That outside the boundaries of naive poetry only this threefold way of feeling and of writing can exist and that consequently the field of sentimental poetry is completely subsumed in this division can easily be deduced from this concept.

Sentimental poetry namely differs from naive poetry in that it relates the real state at which the latter stopped to ideas and applies ideas to the reality. It is thus always concerned simultaneously, as has also been mentioned above, with two opposing subjects, namely with the ideal and with experience, between which it is possible to imagine neither more nor less than the three following relationships. Either we have the *conflict* of the real state or the *harmony* of the real state with the ideal, which latter primarily occupies the spirit, or the spirit is divided between the two. In the first case it is satisfied by the strength of the inner struggle, *by energetic movement*, in the second it is satisfied by the harmony of the inner life, *by energetic stillness*, in the third, conflict *alternates* with harmony, stillness with movement. This threefold state of the emotions gives rise to three different kinds of literature to which the terms used, *satire*, *idyll*, *elegy*, correspond completely as soon as one remembers the mood in which the types of poem which occur under these terms place the spirit and as soon as one departs from the means by which they cause this mood.

Thus anyone who could still enquire here into which of the three genres I place the epic, the novel, the tragedy, etc., would not have understood me at all. For the concept of these latter as *individual sorts of literature* is determined either not at all or not solely by the kind of emotion to be found in them; one knows rather that they can be written in more than one mode of feeling and accordingly in several of the literary categories proposed by me.

Finally I should like to remark here that if one tends, and rightly, to regard sentimental poetry as a real kind (and not merely as a sub-species) of poetry and as an extension of true literary art, then in the definition of poetic genres, as in all poetic terminology, which is still based one-sidedly on the study of the ancient and naive poets, some attention must be paid too to sentimental poetry. The sentimental poet differs in too many essential aspects from the naive poet for the forms which the latter introduced to be freely applied to him. It is indeed difficult here always to distinguish correctly the exceptions which the diversity of the genre demands from the aberrations which lack of talent allows itself; but experience

teaches this much that, in the hands of sentimental poets (even the most outstanding), not a single poetic genre has remained exactly what it was for the ancients and that under the old terms completely new genres have often been created.

61: This probably refers to *Aminta* (1573) by Tasso, translated into German in 1794 by F. G. Walter as *Amynt* but could also be a reference to one of Gessner's *Idylls* entitled *Amyntas*. Similarly *Daphnis* is either Gessner's *Idyll* of that name (1754) or else *Daphnis and Chloe* by Longos of Lesbos (third century A. D.).

62: (S) Just recently, in his 'Luise' Mr Voss [Johann Heinrich Voss (1751-1826), the translator of Homer, published his *Luise*, a pastoral poem in three 'idylls', in 1783-1784. HWOK.] not only enriched our German literature with just such a work but also truly extended it. This idyll, although not completely free from sentimental influences, belongs entirely to the family of the naive and through its individual truth and refined nature struggles to emulate the best Greek models with rare success. For this reason it cannot be compared with any modern poem in its field, which redounds very much to its credit, but must be compared with Greek models, with which it shares the extremely rare merit of affording us a pure, clear and always constant pleasure.

63: Arcadia is a district in Greece whose people were simple and rustic, given to music and dancing. It therefore came to signify the realm of happy pastoral innocence in this world, while Elysium is the abode of the blessed dead in the next world.

64: (S) For the reader who is testing this scientifically let me remark that both modes of feeling, when thought of in their highest potentiality, are related to each other as the first and third categories are because the latter always comes into being by the first being combined with its exact opposite. The opposite of naive feeling is namely the reflective understanding and the sentimental mood is the result of the attempt to restore the substance of naive emotion even under the conditions of reflection. This would happen through the fulfilled ideal in which art again encounters nature. If one goes through the three concepts according to the categories, then one will always find nature, and the naive mood which corresponds to it, in the first, art as the suspension of nature through the reason working freely in the second, and finally the ideal in which a perfected art returns to nature in the third category. [Schiller is referring here to Kant's theory of the categories as expounded in paragraph 11 of *The Critique of Pure Reason*. See Introduction p.15 for further comments. HWOK.]

65: (S) Ancient literature can give us the best evidence for the degree to which the naive poet is dependent on his subject-matter and how much, indeed how everything, depends on his perception. In so far as nature in them and outside of them is beautiful, the works of the ancients are beautiful too; if nature on the other hand becomes base, then the spirit too is fled from their works. Every sensitive reader must, for example in their depictions of the female character, of the relationship between the sexes and especially of love, feel a certain emptiness and a certain disgust which all the truth and naiveté in the representation cannot dispel. Without speaking in favour of gushing emotionalism, which indeed does not ennoble nature but abandons it, one may, I hope, suppose that nature with regard to the relationship of the sexes and the emotion of love is capable of a nobler character than the ancients have given it; one knows too the accidental circumstances which for them stood in the way of the ennobling of those emotions. That it was limitation, not inner necessity, which kept the ancients in this matter on a low level is taught by the example of modern poets who have gone so much farther than their predecessors yet without overstepping nature. We are not speaking here of what sentimental poets have been able to make of this subject; for they go above nature into the ideal and their example can therefore prove nothing against the ancients; we are only speaking of how the same subject-matter is treated by truly naive poets, for example in the 'Sakuntala' [a play by the Sanskrit poet Kalidasa, ca. fourth century A.D. or later. HWOK.], by the minnesingers, in many novels of chivalry and knightly epics, in Shakespeare, by Fielding and by several other, even German, poets. It would have been possible for the ancients by their subjective perception to spiritualise from inside a subject which from outside was too crude, to supply by means of reflection the poetic worth which was lacking in the outward emotion, in a word, by a sentimental operation to make an infinite subject out of a limited one. But they were naive, not sentimental, poetic geniuses; their work ended therefore with the outward emotion.

66: Johann Jakob Bodmer (1698-1783), the influential Swiss critic and editor.

67: Aristophanes (ca. 450-385 B.C.) and Titus Maccius Plautus (254-184 B.C.) are the best-known writers of Greek and Latin comedy respectively.

68: The Spaniard Felix Lope de Vega Carpio (1562-1635), the Frenchman Molière (Jean Baptiste Poquelin—1622-1673) and Jean François Regnard (1655-1709) and the Italian Carlo Goldoni

(1707-1793) are all noted for their comedies.

69: Ludwig Holberg (1684-1754), Danish dramatist, founder of the Danish national theatre.

70: Johann Elias Schlegel (1719-1749), dramatist, particularly of comedies, and an uncle of the leaders of the Early Romantic movement in Germany, the brothers August Wilhelm and Friedrich Schlegel.

71: Christian Fürchtegott Gellert (1715-1769), popular writer of the German Enlightenment.

72: Gottlieb Wilhelm Rabener (1714-1771), the author of the four-volume *Sammlung Satirischer Schriften* (Collection of Satirical Writings: 1751-1755).

73: (S) These good friends took very badly the criticism made a few years ago of Bürger's poems by a reviewer in the A. L. Z. [*Allgemeine Literaten-Zeitung*, a literary magazine. The reviewer is Schiller himself who in 1791 reviewed the poems of Gottfried August Bürger (1747-1794). HWOK.] and the rancour with which they kick against these pricks seems to indicate that in fighting the cause of this writer they are fighting their own. But in this they err greatly. That censure is only applicable to a true poetic genius richly endowed by nature but who had neglected to develop that rare gift by cultivating it. Such an individual may and must be measured by the highest criterion of art because he had the power within him, if he had really wanted to, to live up to it; but it would be both ridiculous and cruel to proceed in the same way with people to whom nature has not given a thought and who, with every product which they bring to market, present a fully valid testimonium paupertatis. [The Muses on the Pleisse, the Leine and the Elbe refer to poets who wrote for three poetry magazines of the day, the *Leipziger*, the *Göttinger* and the Hamburg *Voss'sche Musenalmanach* respectively. HWOK.]

74: Christian Gotthilf Salzmann (1744-1811), the educational reformer, published his novel *Karl von Karlsberg oder Ueber das menschliche Elend* (*Karl von Karlsberg or Of Human Misery*) in 1783-1788.

75: Héloïse is the beloved of the monk Abelard in Pope's verse epistle *Eloisa to Abelard* (1717); Laura is the lady to whom Petrarch's 14th-century love poetry is addressed; St Preux is Julie's lover in Rousseau's novel *Julie ou la nouvelle Héloïse* (1761); Lotte is the adored of Werther in Goethe's novel *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774); Agathon is the hero of Wieland's novel of that name (1766-1767); Phantias is one of the main figures in Wieland's *Musarion* (1768) and Peregrinus Proteus is a figure depicted first by Lucian (see note 25 above) and then by Wieland.

76: Thalia is the Muse of Comedy, Melpomene the Muse of Tragedy.

77: (S) Let me remark, in order to prevent any misinterpretation, that this division is not at all intended to institute a choice between the two, consequently a preference for the one by excluding the other. It is exactly this *exclusion* which is to be found in experience that I want to fight and the result of the present considerations will be the proof that only the completely equal inclusion of the two can do justice to the concept of human nature. Also I take both in their most noble meaning and in all the richness of their potentiality, which can only ever continue to exist through its own purity and by maintaining their specific differences. It will be seen too that a high degree of human truth is compatible with them and that their deviations from each other give rise to changes of detail but not of the whole, of the form but not of the content.

It may seem a strange claim to make for an essay on aesthetics, but *On the Naive and Sentimental in Literature* is a document of courage, perseverance, friendship and moral fervour as poignant as any of Schiller's tragedies.

Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805) burst on the world as a radical dramatist when he was eighteen. He wrote several plays full of a political passion explosive in the years before the French Revolution. As he grew older, he sensed the limitations of his highly successful early dramas. At the age of 30 he stopped writing plays—for a decade—and dedicated himself to study and to establishing the theoretical basis for his future dramas. Plagued by recurrent ill health, he set out to complete his education in literature, history and philosophy, writing as he went a number of important works, the most important of which is this essay, written in 1795.

This method of proceeding from the theoretical to the practical is typical of Schiller; and it contrasts with Goethe's method. It was in part through his contact with Goethe that the energy of this essay was released. It is a monument to the beginning of one of the most fruitful literary friendships of all time.

Schiller is not just concerned with literary theory: he is also concerned with establishing a basis for action and for the operation of the will and it is because of this that we are struck by the candour and honesty of his approach and stimulated by the openness of his ideas. Also, Schiller writes beautiful, clear, vigorous German, he seems to talk to his reader, and the tone and manner change with the ease and intimacy of conversation.

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